THE·CONNOISSEUR

BY·F·S·ROBINSON·

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THE CONNOISSEUR.

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ESSAYS ON THE
ROMANTIC AND PICTURESQUE
ASSOCIATIONS OF ART
AND ARTISTS

By FREDERICK S. ROBINSON

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CENTER

PREFACE.

THESE sketches are an attempt to suggest the atmosphere of romantic interest which surrounds the region of art connoisseurship and collecting.

For his introduction to these attractive pursuits the author is indebted to his father, Sir J. C. Robinson, H.M. Surveyor of Pictures, whose long previous experience as Superintendent of the art collections of the South Kensington Museum has supplied him with a portion of the contents of this volume.

Much of the remaining material is the common property of all lovers of art. The writer's purpose will be in part attained if the perusal of these sketches should lead the reader to a further study of the numerous authorities from whom they have been derived.

* * * * * *

In the chapters on "The Ideal Collector," "Vogue and Prices," "Frauds and Forgeries," "Treasure Trove," and "Famous Collections," the collector's point of view is touched upon.

The chapters on "Patrons of Art in the

Italian Renaissance," "Royal Patrons," and "A Patron of Later Days," are intended to give some account of the classes of men who have enabled artists to live and work. Those on "An Intriguing Sculptor" and "The Troubles of an Architect" sketch the vexations of the artistic life.

"Pliny and Horace Walpole" and "The Indispensable Vasari" are typical historians of the world's masterpieces.

"The Story of the Gem" shows how an entire branch of art may come at last to be utterly neglected, while the chapters on "Jewels and Precious Stones" and "The Goldsmith and Silversmith" draw attention to two of the most attractive of the "minor arts."

Lastly, the sketches of "Art and War" and "Art and Religion" suggest some of the external influences which have affected artistic production.

F. S. R.

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THE ART COLLECTOR.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT PEOPLE COLLECT.

WHAT do lovers of art collect? There is a large proportion of persons who, because they have never turned their minds to it, would be unable upon the spur of the moment to suggest anything beyond the accustomed phrase, "Pictures and old china."

It is to this class that the thought of such a place as the South Kensington Museum conjures up only recollections of a smell from hot-air gratings which were noisy to walk upon, and of a refreshment room which was only too difficult to find. Perhaps it would surprise them to learn that if you have a gallery large enough to house them, you may collect almost all things, from a cast of the Trajan column to the front of a public-house. But not far from the first, concerning which we perpetually wonder how it ever got there, is the "Sir Paul Pindar," built in 1600, to prove that after all the collector's field is not so very closely restricted.

What People Collect.

There are, of course, many kinds of collections. It is possible for the directors of a great national museum to transplant bodily the whole front of an Indian house, with a sinister effigy of its murderous-looking owner sitting retired in the balcony, or to fill long galleries with the great sculptured stones of Egypt, Assyria, and Greece. The private individual feels his impotence in the presence of these achievements. Not for him, as a rule, are the lofty tabernacles and pulpits, screens and fonts from French and German churches, the singing galleries, well-heads and capitals in sculptured marble from Italy, the curious church doors from Norway which recall by their colour and intricacy the Maori carvings of New Zealand.

What a vast field does the word sculpture cover! We think naturally of the great works of Greece and Rome, but the Italian works of the Renaissance are a revelation. Could anything be more beautiful than Agostino Busti's recumbent figure of Gaston de Foix, who met an untimely death at Ravenna? Can those calm, classical features be those of the atrocious youth who, at the age of two-and-twenty years, put the helpless people of Brescia to the sword? How lovely are the fragments of his tomb, which, like his life, was left for ever incomplete! And the great reliefs of Della Robbia, in terra cotta covered with enamel colours; how wonderfully has the burnt clay defied the storms of four hundred years!

"But all this," you will say, "is too big and

too cold for a collector really to love and treasure. Something more intimate, more personal, than these detached ornaments of church and tomb is required to excite enthusiasm." To everyone it is not given to be stirred by sculptured marble, even though it speak like the life itself in the child heads of Donatello,—but have patience, good sir, there is more here than mere stone and clay and plaster. Hitherto your tired eye has passed in but general review over the innumerable cases in these courts which have so oppressed you with their dazzling multiplicity. Life is not long enough, you have felt, to tarry over each separate piece of handiwork, however dainty. The more minute, indeed, the workmanship, the more wasted the ingenuity of him who spent so long upon affairs so trivial. "Did that steel coffer really entail a year of labour, that ivory casket another twelve months of toil?" Yes, and perhaps longer still, for we have read of a decade spent upon the cutting of a tiny gem. "Life had need to have gone slowly in those days," you say, "to justify such expense of workmanship. A hopeless prisoner, or a monk condemned to lifelong seclusion, might amuse himself with such childish intricacies. But the justification of it for a man free to turn his hand to honest, useful labours, tell me where that lies." Truth to tell, if ever justification were required for art, it is in face of this overpowering congeries of things brought from the ends of the earth, and precluded for ever more from their function of beautifying the everyday

life of their first owners. Wrenched from their proper environment and crowded thus together, they do afford some ground for condemnation by the rank utilitarian. But if we tell him that they are gathered together as examples, amongst other purposes, for present and future craftsmen, he would resent them all the more. "That steel coffer might have been as strong to protect without those arabesques, the ivory casket as convenient without those sculptured figures." This utilitarian sentiment has crept even into the minds of some of those who make such trifles now. A reticence of ornament unloved in the Renaissance times is commended. The highest kind of decoration, some say, is that which helps to usefulness. All else is superfluous. A grand simplicity is to be our watchword, and so now we are turning out little useful-artistic coffee-pots, and wall-papers so full of simplicity that we have almost succeeded in persuading ourselves that the useful is the true ornamental. But why should the artist or the lover of art try to set themselves right with the utilitarian? The philosophy of the beautiful is a subject in which we can flounder long enough without finding any definite conclusion. Let us leave it to those who prefer theories of art to art itself—a class whom we confess we have always suspected of an indifferent capacity for appreciating the contents of a museum.

Truly there is something appalling in the contemplation of a great collection of works of art. That a large fraction of man's life should

have been expended on some trifle no bigger than a filbert, so that one can say, "I hold here in the hollow of my hand a month or a year, maybe, of the life-work of some nameless German or Italian craftsman, with all the aspirations that centred in his craft;" that this, too, should be but one infinitesimal, thousandth part of what is hoarded here; these are things hard to realize in a day when such gewgaws are made for the most part by machinery in thousands all alike. But with this thought, perhaps, we have found that loophole of justification which a tenderness for the Philistine has for the moment made us fancy is required. Look round this great collection, and you will be hard put to it to find two single items which are alike as nowadays we make them. There are vast series of sculpture, furniture, arms, earthenware, all the categories of art; but though you may find resemblance, you will seek in vain for exact similitude. Each object is the record of a human effort, short or prolonged, as the case may be, but still human, not of the machine—an effort, too, of the highest part of our nature, that which competes and strives to obtain the best of which it is capable. For in the realms of the finest art there is no standing still, no attaining to a fixed level of capacity. A man shall not say, "I will execute this adequately, and so succeed." No, of the most that we see here the craftsman has said, "This time I will surpass myself." So it is that these objects of art which thousands pass by with a careless glance

to gape at something which bulks larger to the eye, are so many expressions of the unspoken poetry of art, so many examples of the effort for perfection. Often, too, the craftsman has been in his grave a thousand years or more before the full meed of appreciation is paid him. By then his name has long been lost, and his handiwork, perhaps, is crumbling to decay. Then at last we awake to the artistic value of some neglected trifle of which the original giver but lightly thought, and the recipient valued only for the giver's sake. The artist cherished his work, no doubt, and was loath to part with it, as every artist is, even for the sum received, which was not great, but was consoled to think that perhaps one here or there might appreciate its delicacies. Years pass by, and at last there are found a few who can enter into the feeling which inspired the patient skilful craftsman, can note his advancement in design, and appraise the freedom of execution which the hesitating hand has at last attained. Those who can do this are collectors born. To them the artist and the craftsman need no justification. They know that his art was to the artist in great part his religion, and that no bad way of praising God is to do the best with the artistic talent He has given you.

Our object, however, is not to preach upon the claims of a religion of art, or even a collector's appreciation of it, but to consider what a collector deals with. If we try to make a mental arrangement of the items that the col-

lector may hunt after, the variety of material is only surpassed by the multitude of forms and uses to which the material is adapted. If we confine ourselves to a single material such as bone or ivory, we find that it embraces such different objects as caskets and pocket-books, combs and crucifixes. At Copenhagen is the crucifix which belonged to Gunhilde, the niece of Canute the Great. At South Kensington is a marvellous cup, more curious than entirely artistic, perhaps, made in 1681 by Senger, ivory craftsman and turner to Cosimo III., Grand-Duke of Tuscany, Of an earlier date are odd-shaped carved rests to prevent the hands of scribes when writing from soiling the crabbed characters of the fifteenth century. Here are horns or "oliphants" of Byzantine workmanship, chessmen, pyxes or ciboriums, pen-cases and ink-horns from Turkey, pastoral staffs, wands of office, and even chains of ivory to deck some portly major-domo's chest. Here, too, are ivory dice, sundials, scent bottles, and powder flasks. Of the seventeenth century are French tobacco graters elaborately ornamented with such themes as that of Venus instructing Cupid, or Harlequin disporting with a viol da gamba. Of the eighteenth century are seals, walking-stick handles, and powder-puff boxes from Germany, while with the date of 1780 are charming ivory buttons from Normandy. But of all the achievements of the artist in sculptured figures and medallions in ivory, perhaps the most enchanting, though some say they

lack the finest finish, are those six Italian seventeenth century plaques of little fauns and satyrs by Francis Duquesnoy, called "Il Fiammingo." So much for a single material. This long list has hardly exhausted the variety of objects to which the artist in ivory has at different ages turned his cunning hand.

But let us suppose that an intending collector, despairing to cover the unlimited breadth of such a field, should determine to confine himself to one or two common forms. Let us see what choice he has in such useful articles as knives and forks and spoons. That they too are made in ivory goes without saying, but the collector will find himself trenching on the domain of many different craftsmen. Spoons are to be seen made with handles enamelled in relief, or deftly decorated with filigree and enamel combined. The Italians used crystal and dark red jasper in the sixteenth century, and blue glass in the seventeenth. The French amused themselves a hundred years ago by gracing ebony with ornaments both of silver and of gold. From Germany, with the date of 1676, comes a spoon entirely of boxwood. A portrait of a fat Elector is carved in the bowl; Adam and Eve are embracing on the stem; close by them are the Virgin and Holy Child, while to crown this incongruity a monkey tips the end. Germany sends also spoon handles in ivory, with silver wire inlay, coloured with green and red; or in marquetry of tortoiseshell and mother of pearl; while of plainer material are specimens in amber

and even common iron; but that is glorified by engraving of the highest artistic excellence. Though the workmen of a past day rejoiced to use the precious metals, they did not disdain to exercise their craft to the utmost upon the commonest materials. If you wish for confirmation of this, observe to what artistic uses mere leather can be applied. Not confined to human foot-gear or the trappings of horses, leather has been used for such domestic articles as caskets and comb-cases, or such warlike objects as richly decorated shields. Can skill of hand much further go than in this sword-sheath, with its multifarious ornament of lovely figures and medallions? An historic relic is this, for it belonged to Cæsar Borgia, whose monogram is on it thrice repeated. It was made for him, perhaps, by the famous artist Pollajuolo, to be carried at the coronation of Frederick of Aragon as King of Naples in 1497. Much indeed has been done with the common "cuir bouilli" as a material for the display of the artist's loving skill.

If, again, we turn to what is collectively denominated "plate," we discover, besides an unsuspected variety of form, the same love of beautifying cheap material. We find the common stoneware of Cologne, bought for a few pence, decorated with a few shillingsworth of silver, and turned by the silversmiths of Exeter into a work of art for which the collector is glad to pay £200 or more. He will pay as much for a "mazer" bowl of mere maple-wood with

less silver and ornamentation still. In this category of plate we find mounted such things as oriental china, shells of the nautilus and trochus, cocoanut and ostrich eggs, gourds and cow's horns; while for the matter of shape the artist has exercised himself in such curious forms as those of birds and ships and shoes.

Steel is a metal the craftsman has delighted especially to honour, because it is the material of weapons of war and chase. To the mind of a wealthy noble, or mere soldier of fortune, how could an artist be more suitably employed than in decorating a good blade of Solingen or Toledo?

Wonderful, too, were the feats of the Moors in damascening shields and daggers. But most fascinating to us are those dainty little rapiers known as "dress swords," which form a class apart. What pictures of court gallants, what suggestions of intrigue and duels do they conjure up! If we could only see the young bloods who once flourished these in night affrays or crossed them in the stately figures of the dance, whilst their ladies passed with smiling faces upturned beneath the avenue of steel!

But steel in England has graced the fair sex also to advantage. An interesting collection might be made of the graceful buckles, clasps, bracelets, buttons, and fan handles which our English craftsmen used to make a hundred years ago.

We cannot hope, indeed, within the limits of one short chapter to describe what people may

or do collect. If we think of personal adornment, there, besides jewellery, are watches, fans, and snuff-boxes made of every material and gathered from every country. Each different class has formed the subject of some enthusiastic collector's exclusive study. Should a man confine himself to the peasant ornaments of different nationalities, he will have enough to occupy his thoughts; or should he collect only finger-rings, he finds the field too vast when he compares the great thumb or signet ring of a pope with a French betrothal ring or the wedding ring that graced some Jewish bride.

When mere personal ornament implies so much, what are we to say of the larger objects of household use which art has beautified? The inlaid "cassoni" of Italy, the carved oak of our own country, the gilded elaborations from France of Louis Quinze and Seize are too many to describe. A pathetic interest attaches to that lovely escritoire à toilette made by David in tulip and sycamore for the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. When, too, some cabinet of Florentine marquetry, with houses and landscapes of inlaid wood, is found to conceal a little chamber-organ; or a masterpiece in ebony, lapis lazuli, and marble reveals the strings of a clavecin or spinet, we learn that we have come upon another field. Who would not wish to possess the Italian virginal which belonged to Queen Elizabeth, that German organ which Luther is said to have owned, or the harpsichord on which Handel played?

We have said nothing of textile fabrics, but the collector has busied himself with the splendid carpets of Persia, the ancient garments from the tombs of Egyptians, and the shrouds of buried Copts. If these are too faded and sepulchral for our taste, we may amuse ourselves with the tapestry of Flanders, or with those gorgeous ecclesiastic embroideries, the albs, and chasubles of Italy and Spain. Or, if these last are of too brilliant a hue, we can turn to the Italian laces, Venetian rose-point, or the pillow—made of Brussels, Mechlin, or Valenciennes.

How can we hope to describe what the lover of the ceramic art may gather around him? We knew well a collector who confined himself to some branches of English pottery alone. When we have recalled the names of Worcester, Staffordshire and Chelsea, of Bristol and Lambeth Delft and Fulham stoneware, we have mentioned a few of the kinds which ornamented our old friend's rooms with rows on rows six deep.

If we leave England we are lost indeed. The title Hispano-Moresque recalls the lustre wares, the secret of which the modern potter has, perhaps, rediscovered. The name of Bernard Palissy reminds us of a story of a life's devotion, and suggests quaint dishes ornamented with lizards, frogs, and snakes. "Henri Deux" implies that rarest perhaps of all made at Oiron or St. Porchaire in the sixteenth century, and of which, perhaps, not sixty specimens exist. The luxurious finish of the French porcelain of

Sèvres contrasts with the comparatively rougher vigour of the Italian earthenware which, under the generic title of majolica, renders famous such cities as Gubbio and Urbino. Dutch ware of Delft, ware of Dresden, Venice, and Capo di Monte open an unending vista which leads as far as Mexico and Peru.

Our enumeration will never be complete. Enamel, as we have seen, helps to assist the decoration of many an object, but it has to be considered for its own sake in the productions of Limoges, where it completely covers salvers and ewers, salt-cellars and caskets, and keeps green the names of Jean and Leonard Limousin and Jean Courtois. From this we are led on to the intricacies of "cloisonné" and "émail de plique à jour," while we can range at will from the enamel portraits of Petitot to the rough productions of Battersea and Bilston.

Enamel is but glass, and the glass collector will be indignant if we forget that a pilgrim's bottle fetched at auction, in the year of grace 1896, nearly four hundred pounds.

We have to dismiss another whole army in a page. The archæological collector will resent being dismissed with a mere reference to his Egyptian scarabæi and his terra-cotta uglinesses. The coin collector must be congratulated on the artistic beauties of his unending series of Greek drachms and di-drachms; the bronze collector loves to be felicitated on the "patina" or surface texture of his little Venuses and Victories. The book lover has a divided interest, that in the

cover and the contents of his treasures. The latter, except in the matter of such beauties as missal illumination, is, perhaps, beyond our scope, but in the binding the resources of art are exhibited to the utmost. Metal and enamel, leather and gilt, embroidered silk and seed pearl are all found to beautify some "book of hours" or "Office of the Virgin." And from books to engravings the step is short, but the territory to be traversed limitless.

We have, no doubt, omitted the favourite pursuits of many a collector. The lovers of Chinese and Indian art will object to the neglect of their specialities, claiming for them, perhaps, a higher level of taste than we should willingly admit. No such excuse could we urge for omitting mention of their fancies to the numerous votaries of Japan, that wonderful country whose art in the last thirty years has taken us by storm. In the fine lacquered work of Japan perfection lies. What, too, shall we say of its silks, porcelains, and bronzes, its sword-guards, and its drawings by Hokusai?

We relinquish the attempt to enumerate all the quaint conceits of this and other countries so as to satisfy each exacting specialist. We do not write for them. They are all so exceedingly well-informed. But those who wish to glance at the pursuits of that instructed class will have gathered from our brief review that there are other things in Collector's Land besides "pictures and old china."

CHAPTER II.

THE IDEAL COLLECTOR.

Most men can practise with success but one or two branches of art. There have been conspicuous exceptions to the rule, men of an astounding versatility, the accomplishments of any one of whom might have furnished reputations for six ordinary mortals. Such were Leonardo da Vinci, painter, architect, engineer, to mention but a few of the arts in which he was proficient, and Michael Angelo, painter, sculptor, and poet all at once. These were universal creative geniuses. A collector of objects of art, whose knowledge should be coextensive with the whole field of art, cannot indeed claim a place beside these creative heroes; but he is a heroic character nevertheless. Though not so scarce as a Leonardo, he is not often met with in the course of a century. The limited quest of the specialist collector is as dust in the balance compared with the operations of such a man as we are considering. The true connoisseur in the widest sense is never caught napping outside his period or blindly straying beyond his department. To him art is an organic whole, in which the parts react upon

each other. Sculpture speaks to him not only in the colossal or life-size marble, but also in the exquisite delicacies of the intaglio. He traces the forms of architecture in the creations of the gold and silver smith—the gothic chalice reproduces the carved work of the cathedral. A true connoisseur finds confirmation in one branch of art for the peculiarities of another, though they may deal with such different materials as pigments and cotton threads.

He is not merely able to take an æsthetic pleasure, based upon historical study, in all manifestations of art, but he has also the intuitive gift of distinguishing the genuine from the spurious.

This combination of historical knowledge with the intuitive perception which renders knowledge practical, marks a man out as a king among collectors. It is difficult for those who are interested in art to imagine a more delightful life's work. Let us spend a few pages in considering the necessary accomplishments of such a man, and his sphere of action. In so doing we may glean a hint or two for the safe prosecution of our own more humble operations.

He will not be found amongst the dealers in works of art, for they are for the most part wanting in the necessary education of a connoisseur. Their knowledge is not even equal to the exigencies of their trade. An uncommon form of a particular type of object they are obliged to regard with suspicion, because they have not the experience which would enable them to say whether it is genuine or not. And

so they have been known to let many a prize slip through their fingers, and even to be imposed upon by palpable imitations of unique objects of world-wide reputation. Yet a long career has sometimes made no mean connoisseurs of men of this stamp. The late M. Spitzer combined with business qualities real taste and knowledge and love.

I agree with one Dr. John Brown, who says that he is convinced that "to enjoy art thoroughly, every man must have in him the possibility of doing it as well as liking it. He must feel it in his fingers as well as in his head and eyes." This applies most of all to the collector. We should not infer from this that it is expedient for a practising artist, who has spent most of his life in the exercise of his creative skill, to succeed to the directorship of our galleries and museums. This is hardly the case. Our painters for the most part have been fully occupied in learning the technique of their profession. They have not had the time or the inclination for the general education of their taste. They have not had the chance of handling and comparing many objects in many branches of art. Without wide experience a man is likely to have too marked a preference for one phase of art, and in the case of pictures would fill our galleries with specimens of second-rate painters of the early Italian schools, when our pressing need is for some recognition of Watteau and the later Frenchmen.

Neither is it sufficient to be steeped in the

biographical history of art, to know all about Rembrandt's mother, and Saskia and Hendrickje Stoffel, or even to have added an entirely new member to the list of his relations. You must be acquainted with the "handwriting" of the painters, and to do that successfully you must first have practised painting yourself, and then have had leisure to go wherever pictures are to be found.

The Germans are industrious to a degree in the pursuit of a painter's domesticities, but not many of them could be trusted to buy for the nation, and not many Englishmen either. You must have the courage to back your opinion by bidding for a doubtful picture, hung up high and covered with dirt, which may turn out a prize. Those who have not the true collector's intuition must restrict themselves to the accredited masterpieces that come to the sale with a pedigree—and that means money.

No, the ideal connoisseur must be a man who has practised art with success in the commencement of life, and has relinquished his profession for the study and acquisition of works of art in general. Such men have existed, and do exist; of such a stamp should be the makers and directors of great national museums, men whose "flair" and experience mark them out for a post where they have had the chance of dealing with sums sufficient to give them a fairly free hand. If they collect for themselves we may be certain that not much that is spurious will be found amongst their treasures.

Now and again some collection comes to the hammer with a reputation based on the thousands which were paid for it, and lo! the bubble is burst in the auction room in spite of the trumpetings of prefaces and photogravures and wide-margined catalogues. Next week another collection is on sale, but a whisper has gone round that so and so had to do with the formation of it, and that is sufficient guarantee.

It is in the smaller sales, when several properties are sold together and the dealers are at fault—having only their own judgment to go by—that the true connoisseur will find the unnoticed gem. It may be the only genuine picture in a crowd of worthless copies, but at any rate it will be so dirty and have been hung so high in a corner on the viewing days that no one notices its existence. Then, if he has marked it, many an anxious hour will he pass before the sale day arrives and the bidding shows whether the keen-scented have discovered it too. If they have, the price will go up by leaps and bounds, and the connoisseur may be left lamenting. If they have not, it may "go for a song," and he will bring home his prize in triumph. Perhaps a few days after it may leak out that someone with two eyes in his head picked up a Rembrandt for £20 at such and such a sale. There will be a wailing among the dealers: "Why, we were there ourselves all the time!" "Very likely, my friends, and so was the picture, to be discovered by only one person, and that one not the auctioneer!" "Knowledge is

power" is a proverb that holds very true in the purchase of artistic treasures. A sharp eye is required both to discover the prize and also to take care of what you have bought. Do not leave your purchases about by unsold lots, or they will be certainly put up and bidden for again. There was also the sad case of a Hebrew gentleman. He was a great dealer in snuff-boxes. As each lot was knocked down to him he put it into a capacious pocket in the tails of his long coat. When the sale was ended Mr. Moses got up and felt for his snuff-boxes. To his horror his pockets were light. A clever thief had been behind him, relieving him of each one as it was dropped into its deep receptacle, and had decamped with all but the very last. Great was the uproar that ensued; Mr. Moses was for shutting the doors and searching every-one in the room, but that was not feasible, and he was compelled to put up with his irreparable loss.

Christie's is the best and cheapest picture exhibition in London for the disinterested spectator, and a happy hunting-ground for the collector, but our real heroic connoisseur worked in a far wider field than that of the sale-rooms, in the days when London and a few other cities had not yet absorbed almost all there was to collect.

It is difficult to imagine a more delightful life than that of a thorough-going collector. It might include foreign travel and a spice of danger, the excitement of rough journeys to

out-of-the-way places, long rides in the wilder parts of Spain or Italy, with the added anxiety caused by the consciousness of plenty of ready money in your belt. Hazardous journeys in times of war have been made in Italy a generation ago, when it was a question of arriving in time to buy, *en bloc*, a collection which half-a-dozen purchasers were anxious to snap up. Moments of mild intrigue and personal adventure increase your delight in the acquisition of a coveted treasure.

Is it a question of church plate which the priests are anxious to sell? Then you may have judiciously to grease the palms of half a cathedral chapter. His holiness the bishop will display for the future a brighter diamond on his finger since he facilitated the exchange of his old communion plate for new. Most of the proceeds will go to the completion of the cathedral, as at Saragossa twenty years ago, when the votive offerings of the Vergen del Pilar were dispersed—to be found again, some few of them, at the all-embracing South Kensington Museum.

Expeditions in search of special things may lead to curious accidents. Here is a true story of Segovia. There is an "alcazar" used as a barrack, which thirty years ago was half in ruins. In the ruined part was a room lined with a dado of exquisite Moorish tiles. No one cared for them; the soldiers destroyed them daily. The difficulty was for those who affected such things to get at them. The public were not

admitted to the ruins, as they were not considered safe. The only way was to bribe a soldier to bring the tiles. This was done; but to the collector's disgust there was one wanting to make up the pattern. Nothing could make the simple soldier understand. If you want such things you must go yourself. So it was arranged that in the gray of the morning the collector should slip in while the sentry was busy with a market cart that came every day at a fixed hour. All went well; the missing tile was secured, and the collector was nervously escaping from the clutches of the military. Suddenly behind him he heard a noise like thunder. His first idea—prompted by a rather guilty conscience—was that a cannon had been fired at him. Helter-skelter he ran down the slope; then turned and saw a cloud of dust hanging in the still morning air. The ruined tower in which he had been a moment before, was gone. Blowing of bugles, shouts of Spaniards suddenly burst forth, but the tile was safe.

Recent rains had sapped the strength of what was left of the tower. One might fancy that it fell out of resentment at the rifling of its last beauties.

There is a certain pathos in this description of a visit made by a well-known connoisseur to a convent in Spain: "It took two days' ride on mule-back to reach my destination, which lies very remote. There is no carriage road to the convent, only a rough mule-track. I was given full powers by the ecclesiastical authorities to

explore the whole building, and the Lady Superior was enjoined to afford me every facility. The local doctor accompanied me to the gate, but when I was received into the building he was left on the other side of the grille, in spite of his evident anxiety to accompany me. My chief object was to inspect a celebrated altar-piece, said to be the work of Velasquez. I asked to be taken first to the chapel. Dimly lighted, and austere in decoration, it harmonized with the pale, sad, but kindly faces of the Lady Superior and her attendants. 'Well, senor, what do you think of our altar-piece?' I answered that it seemed to me at the first glance to be a work of Velasquez.

"'Ah, senor, I see you know something, but you are at once both right and wrong.'

"'How is that?' I asked.

"'Well, the story is that this is a copy by King Philip IV. from a picture by Alonzo Cano. He did it with his own royal hand, but Velasquez added certain finishing touches. King Philip presented it to Olivarez, his prime minister, and by him it was given to this convent, which he kept under his especial protection. So you see, senor, that our picture is unique, the work of a king and of the first painter in Christendom!' On a closer inspection the truth of the Lady Superior's story was apparent. She was extremely desirous that a privileged visitor, the friend of the king, should see everything. The truth is, there was little more to see. We continued our round, an attendant going before

and warning the nuns to retire as we approached. There would be a sound of hasty flight, and once only a stifled laugh. We entered several cells, white-washed, and dimly lighted by a barred window high in the wall. A bed, a *prie-dieu*, and a crucifix constituted the chief furniture. Before I left the Lady Superior regaled me with sweetmeats, 'which we have made ourselves from our own traditional receipt,' and then she asked me whether it was my pleasure that the nuns should sing me a hymn. I accepted the offer gratefully, and it was with a tightening in the throat that I listened to the beautiful old hymn sung by choristers unseen. Many of the voices were still young, but the effect of the distant music was saddening to a degree. The inmates that I saw were all pale and bloodless. It was as if the reflected light of the whitewashed walls, yellowed slightly by the sun-blinds on the south side of the building, had struck indelibly into the waxen faces of the Superior and her flock. I was glad to emerge into the bright sunlight after parting with the kind and stately Lady Superior, who, I was afterwards told, and might have guessed, was a lady of high degree. Outside I met the doctor, who was anxious to interrogate me. 'You will hardly believe, senor,' he said, 'that though I am the medical practitioner attached to the convent, I have never been further than the grille where you left me to-day. If an inmate is ill, and several of them always are, I have to interview her in the presence of the Superior

and several nuns, with the iron bars between me and my patient. They suffer continually from a malignant low fever, and though I am confident that, if I were allowed, I could remove the cause, they will never permit their doctor to enter. You are the first man, with the exception of the village carpenter, who is both deaf and dumb, that has been received within my recollection.'"

If the needs of the collector take him into out-of-the-way places, the history of his "finds" is very often equally curious.

There existed once an altar-piece by Raphael in a small Italian town. It was a large picture with a "predella," or smaller picture, beneath in three portions. An earthquake ruined the church, the main picture was destroyed, but the reigning pope bought up the fragments of the predella, and pieced them together. When he died his property was sold, and the three pieces of the predella were lost sight of. In 1832 a Portuguese nobleman was living in Rome. There came to him a stranger, who disclosed from under a cloth a small picture, evidently by Raphael, and obviously part of a triptych. The cholera was then raging in Rome, and the stranger said that he had obtained the picture from a house all the inmates of which had died of the epidemic. After taking precautions to disinfect the stranger, himself, and the picture, the Portuguese nobleman bought it, discreetly asking no questions. He returned to Portugal and sold it to the king. A certain collector had

seen this picture at Lisbon. Some years after his visit he saw, in a London sale-room, a picture which he at once recognized as the central part of the predella. He bought it, and it eventually became the property of a friend. Efforts were made by him to induce the authorities at Lisbon to accept an advantageous exchange for their subordinate piece of the predella. They, however, refused, and he had to be content with a copy, which he placed alongside of the original part in his possession. Two-thirds of the predella are thus accounted for. A small fortune awaits the man who can produce the remaining original third portion.

Lastly, objects of art, whose "provenance" is quite unknown, will themselves sometimes unexpectedly reveal their own history. In the exhibition of goldsmiths' work in January, 1895, at the Royal Academy, was a chalice of Italian workmanship, upon which it was necessary not long ago to make some slight repairs. On separating the bowl from the foot, the goldsmith was surprised to see a small piece of parchment fall out of the hollow, with an inscription in Italian to the following effect: "In the 'Annals of the town of Anghiari,' vol. ii., p. 185, may be read the following memoir: 'Whereas the Jews resident in Anghiari were compelled on the feast of St. Martin to furnish a prize for a foot-race of the value of 90 soldi; therefore, to do away with the remembrance of that folly, on the 10th August, 1572, the value of the prize was com-

muted into a chalice bearing the arms of the city, the bowl to be of silver-gilt, and it was presented to the sacristy of St. Francis of the Cross, where down to the present day it may be seen.' 'The present memoir was extracted by the Very Rev. Signor Provost Niccola Tuti, and consigned to me for preservation, and to that end, on the 15th of June of the year 1829, I placed it under the enamelled plaque in the foot of the chalice in question, that by this means might be handed down to posterity the memory of this fact, as it may be found in the annals of Taglieschi. Pietro Bagiotti, Capellano Sacristan, his signature in his own handwriting."

Excellent Bagiotti, if every Capellano Sacristan had been as methodical as you, what romantic interest might attach to many a work of art which at present we admire for its beauty only!

We have seen that the collector's life may have its touch of adventure. What interesting reminiscences of his journeys, explorations, and hard bargainings should be afforded by the works of art with which his house is filled! What diverse epochs and styles here jostle together! Look on this Louis Quinze side-table, with gilt legs and marble top. At one end is a marble bust of a charming little high-born French maiden of 1750, with sweet expression as yet unhardened by the callousness of a heartless period; at the other end—St. John the Baptist, in the guise of a little Italian gamin, betrays the master hand of Donatello. Next,

the figures on a large Venetian door-knocker of bronze are taking stock, with gravity, of a curious Japanese dragon of a most archaic type. A dead Christ, by Michel Angelo, rests on a companion table, flanked on one side by Demosthenes, the orator, with broad head and nervous lips, on the other by the strained expression of a fine example of the so-called Seneca. It is a continual series of concrete antitheses. Italian cassoni, French clocks of Boule's work, cabinets of Japanese lacquer with Dutch mounts in metal, cabinets of the curious ivory inlay of the Indo-Portuguese manufacture of Goa. And round about the walls pictures of every country and period—except the most modern—in the frames which were meant to adorn them, true masterpieces of the designer's and carver's art. Seville, Sèvres, Venice, Urbino, Nuremberg, and a host of other cities, each renowned for its special handiwork, have added their items to form a varied but harmonious whole, a collection which would make no small commotion if brought to the hammer.

But that is an evil day which is not yet; the true collector regards his treasures with an exceeding joy. The latest acquisition is ever the most beloved. Is it a picture? it is the best example he has ever seen of the master, or one of the best. Is it a cloisonné enamel? then its colour is remarkably fine. A jewel? it is of a very unique type. A door-knocker? it is a very important one.

And, last of all, the collector himself is worth

looking at, as he bends over his latest darling in a fine Rembrandtesque light and shade, inspecting the technique of a picture, fingering a jewel, or prying with a magnifying-glass into the exquisite delicacies of an Attic gem.

CHAPTER III.

VOGUE AND PRICES.

THERE has never, perhaps, been such a rage for collecting anything and everything as at the present time. Human nature has not changed much since the days of Pliny, when modern artists were neglected in favour of old masters, and old silver was valued the more in proportion as the design was obliterated. But the present generation has an advantage over Pliny in the artistic production of another eighteen hundred years. Collectors of to-day are not restricted to a few branches of art. Things have changed since the time when, as the result of a grand tour, a taste was brought home for pictures, antique sculpture, gems, and medals, which in the eighteenth century were regarded as the only objects of vertu, and were exclusively collected by those who had the fortune to travel at their ease. There has been in this century a small Renaissance, or rather an awakening to the infinite variety of the artistic field. The spread of artistic education and the rise of provincial art museums have democratized the collector's country. In the last century it was in the prerogative of an oligarchy, who kept for the

most part to those kinds of artistic objects which properly belonged to the "grand," that is, the antique style. Horace Walpole was one of the exceptions, and he paid for it by evincing certain aberrations of taste at Strawberry Hill not unnatural to an enthusiastic pioneer in a new field. But the more old-fashioned "cognoscenti" and "dilettanti" collected many magnificent treasures. Then, later, came good erudite old Dr. Waagen conscientiously to discover the "Art Treasures of Great Britain" which travelling noblemen had collected. He writes home to Germany the results of his researches in long-winded letters, enlivened only by such experiences as his sufferings on the sea-passage and his introduction to Scotch whiskey, which he sums up as a beverage that might, he could well understand it, be imbibed with a certain enthusiasm. Since his first visit in 1830, many of the great collections he describes, as those of Stowe and Hamilton Palace, have been brought to the hammer. Their treasures have been scattered far and wide to form the nucleus of other collections, less individually important perhaps, but far more numerous. So the ball has been set a-rolling, until not, perhaps, "all the world," but a good fraction of it, enjoys a visit to Christie's before a great sale, even if it can never hope to do more than merely dabble in, and perhaps burn its fingers with, curiosities. The newspapers have recognized the spread of this once exclusive taste, and are quick to note the rise and fall of prices in the market of art. The

"Times" could no longer afford to speak contemptuously of such a sale as that of Horace Walpole's collection at Strawberry Hill. When, in 1842, it was brought to the hammer of that inimitable puffer, George Robbins, the "Times" spoke disparagingly of a collection which contained such precious objects as a silver bell said to have been made by Cellini for Clement VII.; the missal of Claude, the neglected queen of Francis I.; the wonderful hunting-horn of Limoges enamel, pictured with the life of St. Hubert, the patron saint of huntsmen, said to have been made for Francis I., and sold in 1892 for nearly £7,000. Lastly, there was the clock which Henry VIII. gave to Anne Boleyn on her marriage morning. This was bought at a quite moderate price for the royal collection. Our queen, we venture to say, would have to pay a larger price to-day than was then given for "the silver-gilt timepiece bearing a true lover's knot, with motto 'The Most Happye.'" Of it Harrison Ainsworth wrote: "This love token of enduring affection remains the same after three centuries, but four years after it was given the object of Henry's eternal love was sacrificed on the scaffold. The clock still goes. It should have stopped for ever when Anne Boleyn died." This was in 1842. Thirty-four years later the "Times," in 1876, gives a special article upon the sale of a single picture, which well illustrates the rise of price which vogue and fashion bring about.

It is true that the picture in question was the

notorious Gainsborough portrait of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, which became a nine days' wonder when, three weeks after the sale, it was cut out of its frame in Bond Street by a thief, and has not since been seen. But that was subsequent to the publishing of the "Times" article, which is enthusiastic over the price, 10,100 guineas, the highest ever till then paid for a picture bought at Christie's. Since then, greater prices have been paid, both at sales and in private contracts. The nation has paid £70,000 for a Raphael, and portraits by Sir Joshua have sold for higher sums than that paid for the ill-fated duchess. But 10,100 guineas is a notable price to pay. We quote here from the "Times" description of the scene: "When the portrait was placed before the crowded audience a burst of applause showed the universal admiration of the picture. . . . The biddings then commenced at 1,000 guineas, which was immediately met with one of 3,000 guineas from Mr. Agnew, and amid a silence of quite breathless attention the bids followed in quick succession, at first by defiant shots across the room of a thousand guineas; then, as if the pace was too severe, the bids were only 500 up to 6,000 guineas, when again another thousand pounder was fired by Mr. Agnew, making it 7,000 guineas. Still the fight went on briskly with 500's till there was a shout of applause at 10,000 guineas, and then a serious pause for breath between the combatants, when Mr. Agnew was the first to challenge 'any further

advance' with his 10,100 guineas, and won the battle in this extraordinary contest. The whole affair was of its kind one of the most exciting ever witnessed : the audience, densely packed on raised seats round the room and on the 'floor of the house,' stamped, clapped, and bravoed."

Now this picture that raised so great a furore was bought in 1839 for a paltry £50, and was sold to Mr. Wynn Ellis for £63. As if also to emphasize the truth that the pictures for which the very largest prices are paid are frequently not the very best examples of the master, many were the doubts expressed upon its deserts. "The doctors, though they differ as to the authorship, agree as to the high merits of the picture," says one writer. "It was a true Gainsborough," said another, "but left unfinished by him and repainted by some recent hand." This writer recalls that Allan Cunningham relates in his "Lives of the Painters," that Gainsborough once failed in painting a full-length portrait of Georgiana, saying he found the duchess was too much for him.

The prices of pictures by Sir Joshua and Gainsborough have gone up with an extraordinary bound. It is but a year or so since Sir Joshua's "Lady Betty Delmé and her Children," and Gainsborough's "Lady Mulgrave" fetched figures as high, or higher still, than that paid for the "Duchess of Devonshire," while a Gainsborough landscape, sold for £840 in 1867, fetched £3,225 at Sir Julian Goldsmid's sale in

1896. A point to be noticed as regards present prices is that extravagant sums are now paid for very ordinary examples of a master. Fine examples of Rembrandt have fetched much money during the present century. In 1807, the "Woman taken in Adultery" brought £5,250. In 1811, the "Master Shipbuilder" fetched the same price, but the prices in two figures common enough earlier in the century are seldom paid now. Five thousand pounds sufficed only to buy a comparatively unimportant picture for the Edinburgh Gallery a short time ago.

Quite as astonishing has been the continuous rise in price of Rembrandt's etchings. The celebrated print of "Christ healing the Sick" is called the "hundred guilder print," because Rembrandt is said to have given an impression to a dealer in exchange for prints by Marc Antonio valued at 100 guilders, about 800 francs. An impression was sold in 1755 at the Burgy sale for a modest £7. In 1840 the price of a print at the Esdaile sale had reached by fairly steady progression to £231. Between 1840 and 1860 a great awakening of England in matters of art had commenced. How did it affect the sale of etchings? It added a thousand pounds to the value of this particular "scratching upon copper." At the Price sale in 1867 a "hundred guilder print" fetched £1,180. Twenty years later, in 1887, at the Buccleugh sale, the enormous sum of £1,300 was not considered too much to pay. We must remember that these prices were paid for a print of which

but few are known to exist. The available number is continually being reduced to even smaller dimensions by the securing of prints for public museums. There they are to reside for ever more in a haven of rest, no longer bandied about from collector to collector, and emancipated once for all, unless national misfortune happens, from the chances of the sale-rooms. A quite pathetic incident is related of the sale of a very scarce etching by Rembrandt, the "Dr. Arnoldus Tholinx," sometimes called the Advocate Van Tol. M. Charles Blanc says that at the Pole Carew sale in 1835 the Chevalier de Claussin, who catalogued Rembrandt's works, wished greatly to buy a fine proof. The warmth of the bidding was at its height. Every face became changed. M. de Claussin could scarcely breathe. As the print was handed round and finished the circuit of the table, the bidding rose to £200. Poor Claussin grew pale, a cold sweat ran down his temples. Unable to restrain himself any longer, and feeling certain that he had to deal with a powerful antagonist, he tried to soften the heart of the unknown competitor, who was waging so hard a fight. After stammering out some words in English, "Gentlemen," he said in that language which he could speak almost as well as his mother tongue, "you know me. I am the Chevalier de Claussin. I have devoted a portion of my life to preparing a new catalogue of the works of Rembrandt, and to copying the rarer etchings of this great master. I have

now been searching these twenty-five years for the Advocate Van Tol. . . . If this example escape me, I cannot at my age ever hope to meet with the print again. I beg my competitors to take into consideration the services that my work may render to amateurs, the fact that I am a stranger, and the sacrifices which all my life I have imposed upon myself in order to form a collection which shall enable me to make fresh observations on the masterpieces of Rembrandt. A little generosity, gentlemen," added Claussin, by way of peroration. The tears were already in his eyes. The unexpected speech produced some sensation; many were affected by it. Some smiled, and whispered to each other that this same M. de Claussin, who was capable of running up the price of a print to £200, might often be seen of a morning in the streets of London going to fetch in a little jug his two pennyworth of milk. But after a moment's pause a sign was made to the auctioneer, a bid was declared, and the fatal hammer fell to the offer of £220.

Of the general law that in this age of collecting the price of everything tends to rise, we may be tolerably well convinced. An inquiry into the reasons for exceptions to the rule would result in no definite conclusion. What vagary of chance, for instance, has ordained that the pictures of Franz Hals should only quite recently have advanced to a value consistent with their merits? We do not compare him with Rembrandt as an artist. We only

wonder that pictures by the man who could paint such delightful and freshly-executed portraits as that of the "Laughing Cavalier" of Lady Wallace, the "Burgomaster" in Buckingham Palace, or the examples in our National Gallery, should have been picked up twenty years ago for under £50 apiece.

At the Bernal sale in 1855, £14 were paid for a picture 18 inches by 16, and £2 15*s.* for a 34 × 26. In 1859 a portrait of himself from Lord Northwick's collection fetched 18 guineas. These of course may not have been fine specimens, but not till 1885 did a picture by Franz Hals fetch £1,000 at public auction. Now the story is very different. Any leathery specimen which can be fathered on Franz Hals, and foisted on to the public, fetches a considerable price. His name and that of Romney have been names to conjure with of late. Romney's "Miss Shore" has gone up from £1,953 in 1895, to £2,887 in 1896. Similarly "Lady Shore," in the same sale—Sir Julian Goldsmid's—has advanced from £1,890 £2,100. As a general rule the portrait of a lady fetches a far higher price than that of a gentleman, and an inferior specimen at the sale of a well-known collection has as good a chance as a masterpiece without a pedigree to back it. Size is no guide to prices. The Dudley Raphael, "The Three Graces," only 7 inches square, fetched £25,000 in 1885.

Other painters' works have fetched high prices of late years. Though Hobbemas have frequently

been sold for one and two thousands, the art world was taken by surprise when some five years ago a masterpiece of his fetched £9,000. Paul Potter had never reached £2,000 until in the Dudley sale, in 1892, a small picture went for full £5,000. The minute and precious Francis Mieris shows signs of falling backwards in public estimation. His matchless "Enamoured Cavalier," only about 17 inches by 14, sold for £4,100 in 1875, fetched only £3,675 in 1876, and at the Dudley sale somewhat less still. This may remind us that there is a reverse state of affairs to be considered. Painters who have been honoured in former days drop out of repute. Guercino was thought great once, but he fetches low prices now. His "Sibylla Persica," once so popular, and so often repeated by him, is in disrepute. A "Christ and the Woman of Samaria," sold for £530 in 1859, went down to £378 in 1873. We know of a similar subject by him for which Lucien Buonaparte gave £700, and the auction value of which some fifteen years ago was but £25.

About 1860, £10,000 was refused when offered for a Carlo Dolce; no such offer would now perhaps be made. There are many other names of painters once valued whom the same fate has overtaken. Some have earned inflated prices while alive, and directly after death the bladder of their reputation has been pricked most ruthlessly. Others, like Richard Wilson, have never been adequately appreciated. He

struggled with poverty during life, and only once or twice has a picture by him reached £1,000. Yet those who know the works of the "English Claude" feel their noble charm. The greatest sale of this year, 1896, Sir Julian Goldsmid's, has shown the fluctuations of the market. Gainsborough, as will be guessed from what we have said before, still advances. "Mr. and Mrs. Delaney," sold for £157 10*s.* in 1882, jumps to £2,205 in 1896. Reynolds, with "Mrs. Mathew" and the "Hon. Mrs. Monckton," about holds his own at £4,200 and £7,875 respectively. Turner has made an appropriate leap with "Rockets and Blue Lights," from £745 10*s.* in 1886, to £3,865 at the present time. But Linnell, the often delightful Linnell, has fallen heavily from £1,365 for "A Welsh Landscape," to but £840.

Two pictures are said to have changed hands this year at a price of £20,000 in each case, the "Naples" Raphael and the "Darnley" Titian of "Europa and the Bull."

Our critics and painters have of late years enthroned Velasquez. We hear very little from them about Murillo, though in the sale-room, till within the last twelve years, he has always been the greater favourite. Mr. Curtis, in his work on these two artists, points out that Murillo has always, up to 1883, been on the whole more highly valued. He shows that twenty-one pictures by Velasquez only averaged about 38,000 francs, as compared with a 62,000 francs average for fifty-three works by Murillo. Yet this is

quite intelligible. Velasquez is a painter's painter. Technique counts for much with him, and subject little. He has been handicapped in the sale-rooms by the stolidity of the features of his princes and the acidulated expressions of his little princesses. Velasquez is however at last revenged. Our whole-length Philip IV. in the National Gallery was bought in 1882 at the great Hamilton sale for £6,300, which far transcends what had ever been paid for Murillo. Since then the portrait of the Admiral Pareja has been acquired for the National Gallery at a much higher price.

General attractiveness certainly counts for much in determining the scale of prices. To this and historical associations we must attribute such prices as are paid for French furniture. In the Hamilton sale a Louis Seize secretaire in ebony inlaid with black and gold lacquer, mounted in brass by Gouthière, and with the monogram of Marie Antoinette, fetched the astounding price of £9,450. Limoges enamels, which for their combination of durability, finish, and brilliant colouring are beloved of connoisseurs, fetch prices proportionately high. If Horace Walpole could have seen the prices gained by his examples sold at the Magniac sale in 1892, he would have felt that his hobbies were justified. A note in the catalogue upon a large dish by Martial Courtois, sold for £1,207 10*s*., informs us that it originally belonged, together with a fine ewer, to two aged ladies in Bedfordshire. When, about 1835, the ladies, having

understood that these pieces were of some value, sent them to Messrs. Town and Emmanuel, the dealers, to be sold, they valued them at a small sum, declined to purchase them on their own account, and offered the two to Mr. Magniac for £15. Mr. Magniac being made acquainted with the circumstances, and thinking this amount inadequate, gave £30 for the two pieces, a much greater sum than the real vendors expected to receive. For two pairs of historic portraits in the same enamel, more than £3,000 for each pair was paid. So much for superficial attractiveness combined with genuine qualities of art.

Upon these very grounds we should have expected that Watteau's pictures would always have pleased. Some little time ago a lady left three pictures to the Gallery at Edinburgh. She was probably unaware that she was presenting the city with a small fortune. The three would very probably fetch £15,000. It is only of late that we have awakened to the fact that Watteau was one of the world's greatest draughtsmen and a colourist to boot. Not till 1873 did a picture by him reach £1,000. We have heard it said that in the days of Ingres students in Paris had been known to paint studies of heads over canvases on which Watteau had worked. Not that Ingres had encouraged them to it. He had silenced a student who talked scornfully of Watteau in the expectation of sympathy from Ingres, with the brief words, "Let me tell you that you are speaking of a great master." And this we are finding out at last. It will be a pleasant thing when the

authorities of the National Gallery can afford to buy a specimen.

Of the drawings of the old masters the same tale as that of Rembrandt's etchings might be told. Forty years ago good drawings might be picked up "for a song" upon the bookstalls of Paris. Now every pencil-mark of a master has its value. The British Museum has lately acquired the magnificent Malcolm collection at a large price, but one far below its present value, thanks to the generosity of its late owner. The sums paid by the collector who formed the larger part of that collection would astonish the uninitiated by contrast with their present value. For a drawing by Michel Angelo £1,400 has been bid this year, 1896.

Things have changed since the nation first entered the lists as a bidder at Christie's and elsewhere. At the great Bernal sale in 1855 the nation's representatives were tightly restrained with red tape. They were obliged to furnish beforehand an estimate of the prices the coveted lots were likely to fetch—an impossible task. On the first day of sale some lots fetched prices below the estimate, some far above; the net result was that the nation's representatives, hampered by their instructions, saw with mortification the desired prizes escape them. They determined to throw instructions overboard. They bought as unfettered competitors, and the nation has had no cause to regret it. Those were times when to pay £120 for a majolica plate was regarded as raving lunacy. People

wrote to the papers to complain of the waste of public money when the celebrated "Painter" plate, with a picture of an artist painting majolica, was bought for that sum. At this time, perhaps, not £2,000 would buy that plate if it were to come to the hammer. It is among those described in the general guide of the South Kensington Museum as of "European celebrity." At the Stowe sale it fetched only £4, and was sold to Mr. Bernal for £5. A "Maestro Giorgio" plate, sold for a large sum at the Fountaine sale in 1884, had actually been purchased for £80 for South Kensington Museum, and handed back because the Treasury refused to ratify the purchase as too extravagant.

It is impossible to do more than touch the fringe of a subject such as this. A systematic account of collector's crazes would reveal unaccountable expenditures. There are always the two elements of artistic merit and mere rarity to be considered. A work just published upon "Horn-books" reveals the fact that £60 or more have been paid for one of these, whose artistic merits are doubtful, and whose original cost was but a few shillings only. Not so many years ago, about the time that blue and white porcelain was so greatly in demand, there was a craze for "ginger pots." Full £70 was paid for a specimen the own brother of which was bought by a collector who "knew his way about" for £2 10*s*. Who knows what strings are pulled so as to cause certain objects of art or the works of certain artists to come into vogue

and suddenly fetch large prices? We have noticed elsewhere how the Florentine terra cottas were neglected till a connoisseur drew attention to them, and then £300 was not thought too much for a bust which turned out a fraud after all. Of late years Egyptian antiquities have been in fashion. We remember well hearing in 1889 a well-known Paris dealer say, pointing to his scarabæi and blue-glazed little gods and mummies, "J'ai poussé cela très loin." That phrase does much to explain the situation. Someone rediscovers and pushes, the collecting public pays. We have just now a healthy competition for book plates, and a literature of the subject rapidly being made. We are continually unearthing some forgotten worthy. A few years ago that misguided eccentric, Blake, was disinterred from oblivion. As a consequence, there are people quite ready to pay for his feeble artistic efforts. The very latest artist to be discovered at the time of writing is Houghton, of the era of Frederick Walker, Pinwell, and Sandys. Those who have the good fortune to possess copies of the publications in which his drawings are to be found, will find them worth a price after all. The *reductio ad absurdum* is perhaps arrived at when the modest volumes of a living minor poet are by means of limited editions ingeniously fostered into fictitious values.

CHAPTER IV.

FRAUDS AND FORGERIES.

A WHOLESOME scepticism, or the traditional unbelief of the Hebrew—who, by the way, is very frequently a dealer in works of art—forms an important part of the equipment of the collector. When there is a demand for any kind of work of art, then for a certainty appears a miraculous supply. There will never be wanting workmen clever enough to copy the genuine work of art, so long as there are innocents to be deceived by their fabrications. They would, indeed, confound the original artist himself, so expert are they, so long as they confine themselves to the production of facsimiles. When they commence to invent, the connoisseur is ready to detect them. Some fault of style, some small anachronism will expose the fraud, but the judges competent to point out these deviations, how few are they, and how often have those few been found to disagree!

We are not able to say when the first artistic fraud was perpetrated, but as early as about 1510 Albert Durer was sorely tried by the imitative skill of the Italian Marc Antonio. The latter was most accomplished in the art of

engraving upon copper, which had been discovered by Maso Finiguerra about the year 1450. When Marc Antonio was in Venice there arrived some Flemings who brought numerous copper-plate engravings and woodcuts by Albert Durer, which they offered for sale on the Piazza of St. Mark's. Amazed at their excellence, Marc Antonio spent almost all his money in the purchase of these plates, which included thirty-six woodcuts of the Passion of our Saviour. He perceived that there was money to be made in Italy by the new art of engraving. Unfortunately his method of making a fortune was not strictly upright. He began to copy these engravings of Albert Durer, imitating them stroke by stroke, until he had produced facsimiles of the whole thirty-six plates of the Passion. Then he added the signature A. D. of the German artist, which completed the imposture. These clever imitations were freely bought and sold as the works of Albert Durer himself. One of the counterfeits was sent to the latter, who hastened in a fury to Venice, and laid a complaint against Marc Antonio ; but the only justice he could obtain was an injunction against the engraver prohibiting him from affixing the A. D. to his plates. Retribution, however, came upon Marc Antonio in the end. In the sack of Rome he was taken prisoner by the Spaniards, who made away with all his property, and compelled him to pay such a ransom that he ended little more than a beggar.

The forging of works of art may safely be

said to have never ceased since the days of Marc Antonio. We have seen the traffic which was made in false antique gems in the eighteenth century, which King has called the "Age of Forgery." The painter, too, was hard at work in those days. Hogarth was moved to rush into print, so indignant was he at the vamping up of "Black Masters" to be sold to the credulous at the expense of contemporary painters. He could be as incisive with the pen as with the brush. "There is another set of gentry," he writes to the "St. James's Evening Post" in 1737, "more noxious to the art than these. . . . It is their interest to depreciate every English work, as hurtful to their trade of continually importing shiploads of Dead Christs, Holy Families, 'Madonas,' and other dismal dark subjects, neither entertaining nor ornamental, on which they scrawl the terrible cramp names of some Italian masters, and fix on us poor Englishmen the character of universal dupes. If a man naturally a judge of painting, not bigoted to these empirics, should cast his eye on one of their sham virtuoso pieces, he would be apt to say, 'Mr. Bubbleman, that grand Venus (as you are pleased to call it) has not beauty enough for the character of an English cook-maid.' Upon which the quack answers with a confident air, 'O Lord, sir, I find that you are no connoisseur. That picture, I assure you, is in Alesso Baldovinetto's second and best manner, boldly painted and truly sublime; the contour gracious; the hair of the head in the high Greek

taste; and a most divine idea it is.' Then spitting on an obscure place and rubbing it with a dirty handkerchief, takes a skip to the other end of the room, and screams out in raptures, 'There is an amazing touch; a man should have this picture a twelve-month in his collection before he can discover half its beauties.'"

It has been reserved for our own times, perhaps, to see the greatest achievements in every branch of counterfeited art. There has hardly ever been so outrageous a fraud committed as those of the soi-disant Constable and Turner pictures offered for sale in 1869. "Lovers of the works of the two great masters of the British School, Turner and Constable," were specially invited in June of that year to come and see four splendid pictures. "Turner is represented by a glorious Italian composition, the distance bathed in marvellous sunlight; the whole work lovely in design, colour, and execution, painted in the meridian of the artist's power and genius." By Constable were "three grand rural landscapes, which show how truly this great English painter could delineate the sunny meadows and refreshing streams of Dedham's rich pastures and Sarum's fertilizing valley." It was natural that the whole picture-loving world should flock to see these pictures, which the auctioneers, a well-known and most respected firm, represented as "painted by express commission and never publicly exhibited." On the first day that the pictures were exposed to view, the expectant connoisseurs noticed an unusually strong smell

of varnish in the room. Suspicions were immediately aroused by the Constable pictures. They were "six-footers," not exhibited under glass as the Turner was. No one had heard of them before, though the whereabouts of all Constable's pictures were supposed to be known to collectors. Three first-class pictures of Constable uncatalogued before, this was sufficient to try the faith of an expert! "What do you think?" said one to another, and they would shake their heads and pass on. "Curiously enough," writes in "The Nineteenth Century" an eyewitness of the scene, "there was a certain unmistakable kinship discernible betwixt the Constables and the Turner, certain peculiarities of touch and colouring, just as if Turner had worked on Constable's pictures, and Constable had in his turn rendered the same service for him." This writer was one of those who at length tried the pin test. Oil paints, especially those which have much white in them, become very hard after the lapse of years. If a pin will stick easily into a lump of white, the inference is that that lump of white has not been on the canvas for long. He selected an unctuous morsel, and lo! the pin penetrated it with ease. "The picture might have been turned into a veritable pin-cushion." The late Mr. Wallis, proprietor of the French Gallery, was amongst those who tried the pictures with the thumbnail, with the same result. The secret soon was spread abroad, and the auctioneers wisely withdrew the pictures from sale.

Mr. Joseph Gillott, of pen-making fame, a great collector in his day, and patron of W. Muller, another artist whose Eastern scenes have been widely imitated, had telegraphed to Mr. Cox, his agent, "Buy all the Constables at any price." His agent laconically telegraphed back, "Not for Joseph." It is well to know that these frauds no longer exist as traps for the unwary. They were insured by their owner for the amount which he had paid for them, and on February 13th, 1874, they perished in the great fire at the Pantechnicon furniture warehouse.

They belonged to a gentleman who, besides a vast collection of "duffers," possessed many good pictures, some of which he bequeathed at his death to the National Gallery. In his collection was that notorious "Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire," by Gainsborough, for which Messrs. Agnew paid 10,100 guineas, the highest price that had ever then been paid for a picture at Christie's. Three weeks after, it was stolen out of its frame, and has never been seen since. We refer to it elsewhere.

Constable frauds still continue. Modern pictures without the brown tone of the old masters are easier to imitate, and the demand for Constables, and especially Corots, at the present time, is most amply supplied. It is a truly astonishing thing that a great buyer of pictures should be so simple as to purchase as an original for several thousand pounds an arrant copy of one of Constable's best-

known landscapes, and that one which has been twice exhibited to the public in the last few years!

How are we to distinguish an original from a copy? This is not the place for a technical disquisition. We may remark, however, that a copy is, as a rule, darker in tone than its original. This arises perhaps from the fact that the genuine work is often hung in a badly-lighted room or gallery, and the copyist is compelled to imitate it as it seems to be in that half-light. When the copy is completed, if the original could be brought into the same light as that on the copyist's easel—naturally the best that could be obtained for the painter's operations—then the tone of the original would be found to be in reality much lighter. The copyist discovers that he has made his imitation on too dark a scale.

A contemporary copy of an old picture is frequently a deceptive snare. Is it not on record that when Federigo, Duke of Mantua, begged Clement VII. to give him Raphael's portrait of Leo X., those who were instructed to despatch the picture substituted a copy by Andrea del Sarto in its place? Even Giulio Romano, the pupil of Raphael, was deceived by it, and when Vasari showed him the sign by which alone the two could be distinguished, Giulio Romano, who had actually himself worked upon the original, shrugged his shoulders and said, "I esteem it as highly as if it was by the hand of Raphael, nay more, for it is a most

amazing thing that one master should have been capable of imitating the manner of another to such an astonishing degree."

But if an interval has elapsed between the painting of the original and the copy, the two may be distinguished by the different pigments employed. Certain colours are of modern invention. If we discover the use of these upon a picture which purports to be ancient, we need no longer hesitate as to the fraud. Such was the case with the notorious Constables we have mentioned. Though less than fifty years need have elapsed between the painting of these pictures and the best time of Constable, new colours had been invented in the interval which the great painter never saw.

The substance upon which a picture is painted is often a sure guide. The panel of an Italian picture is made of a different wood and jointed up in a different manner to that of an English or German panel. If we found upon an Italian panel a picture purporting to be a Franz Hals or a Velasquez, we should be compelled to regard it with suspicion.

But the considerations which guide the expert are many and various. All minor details are subordinated to his knowledge of the "manner" and "handwriting" of each particular master. A lifelong study of that is an indispensable qualification.

Not so very long ago there was said to have been discovered in a country house not far from Stratford-on-Avon a portrait of William Shake-

speare. The event was hailed with enthusiasm both by Shakespeare scholars and lovers of art. It was even said to be the original from which the well-known engraving by Martin Droeshout was made. This it certainly was not, but so skilfully was it manufactured that it might almost have passed as genuine. It was executed with all the rough untutored vigour which would have been characteristic of a portrait of the time, as it is of the bust in Stratford-on-Avon church. When, however, the back was inspected, the picture was found to have been painted upon an Italian white-wood panel. This, though not absolutely conclusive, was practically so to a connoisseur. It is just barely possible that an English portrait painter of that time may by chance have used an Italian panel. We shall see that there were other considerations which determined the picture to be a fraud. It was too difficult a task to manufacture a panel that should look old. The cracks which appear when the "keying" overtightens the panel, and the ravages of worm-holes, are not easily produced. So the painter had done the next best thing—he had taken an old panel upon which a portrait already existed. He well knew that underlying paint, especially dark paint, has a habit of appearing through the paint which is laid upon it. He had endeavoured to obviate this contingency by painting his Shakespeare's face very solidly, but the inevitable had supervened in spite of his precautions. Close observation revealed the portrait of a lady dressed in a

ruff—a very unusual apparition to appear beneath an original portrait. The texture of the drapery had a corrugated appearance which experts know results only from the use of "megilp," a varnish of oil and resin. But megilp, unfortunately for our painter, was not used at the time this portrait was supposed to have been painted. The frame was also ingeniously chosen. At the bottom was a cartouche with the name of "Wil^{m} Shakspeare" and the date "1609" upon it in the cursive lettering of the time, except that in the case of one single letter a mistake had been committed. It was of a modern shape. Strangely enough, this cartouche had, like the panel, done service before, for when it was detached it was found to have been turned inside out, and on the original face was revealed that of a Dutch painter. The true date of the frame was about 1640. These and other considerations too long to mention showed that this aspirant to the honours of an original Shakespeare portrait was but one more in the long list of clever forgeries.

Many genuine pictures have, of course, been painted upon panels or canvases which have before been employed by the artist, as in the case of that one which Sir Joshua sent to Russia with the remark that there were eleven pictures more or less good upon it. We are acquainted with an amusing instance of this. A rapid sketch portrait of Rembrandt by himself was being cleaned by its owner, a well-known connoisseur. Some strange evolution seemed to

be taking place upon the surface, and it was not long before he realized that if he did not cease his operations he would be the possessor, not of a Rembrandt portrait in the painter's best manner, but of a "Joseph and his Brethren" of an earlier period. Joseph was clad in bright red breeches which the great artist had adapted into his own red waistcoat.

With sculpture it is perhaps easier to deceive than with painting. In the days now past, when pictures, antique sculpture, and gems were almost the only objects of art collected, the process of imposition was achieved by unlawful restoration. The Roman dealer would attach the head of one antique bust to the torso of another statue, and so produce a new statue which yet might be said to be entirely antique. The rage for this branch of art has died away; but thirty years ago the "quattro-cento" terra cottas of Florence first attracted the notice of collectors. Here was a new demand, and it was not long before the cleverest series of apparently quattro-cento busts was placed upon the market.

There is something at once ludicrous and pathetic about the story of Bastianini. He was a wasted genius, who spent his short life in the manufacture of imitations of Donatello and others for the enrichment, not of himself, but of the dishonest dealer who led him astray. He was a peasant, born in 1830, and employed to sweep out his studio by a sculptor named Torrini. By watching him work, just as Juan

Pareja watched his master Velasquez, he laid the foundations of his astonishing technical skill. Somehow or other he became tied to a dealer in genuine and forged sculpture named Freppa, who employed him in his shop at two francs a day, and sold his work as genuine Florentine terra cotta of the fourteenth century. A bust of Savonarola caused great excitement when it was offered for sale. The buyer of it, one Nino Costa, paid a price of 10,000 francs. One day Castellani, the well-known connoisseur, began to speak to Costa of a certain bust of a poet which had been bought by the authorities of the Louvre in 1867 as a genuine work, but which he knew to be the production of Bastianini. Remarking that that bust was nothing in comparison with one of Savonarola which he had seen in Bastianini's workshop, he wondered where the Savonarola then was. Costa then told him that he had bought it, thinking it was a genuine piece of fourteenth century work. Then Castellani told him that an antiquary named Gagliardi was in the secret, and could point out the model who had sat for the bust, and the furnace where the clay was baked. Costa went to see Bastianini, who confessed that the work was his. It is said by the well-known writer upon spurious works of art in "The Nineteenth Century" review, from whose account, and that of another writer in "The Magazine of Art," our details have been taken, that the fraud upon the Louvre was thus discovered. Freppa had an enemy, an eccentric

dealer named Dr. Foresi. He had offered some genuine sculpture to the Louvre, which was declined, and even regarded with suspicion. Foresi in a rage said: "You refuse to buy genuine work, and yet you go and give 13,000 francs for that fraudulent bust of a poet." At this there was a commotion. "The authorities of the Louvre laid the matter before a select assemblage of the most competent and highly-placed art connoisseurs and critics of Paris, one and all men whose names were of European celebrity, and whose judgment was received as gospel truth. After a most searching scrutiny of the bust, these high authorities unanimously agreed that it was a perfectly genuine work of the Italian quattro-cento period, and that Foresi's representations were malicious and baseless calumnies." Foresi was not to be put down. When the Louvre authorities caused the bust to be photographed, Foresi, who had found the original model, a Florentine tobacconist, photographed him in the same attitude, and sent it to all the connoisseurs. "The resemblance was absurdly convincing." "At that time France was politically most unpopular in Italy, and the affair soon assumed quite the proportions of an international art duel." Freppa and Foresi made friends, and the former now announced that he had sold the bust for 700 francs, Bastianini receiving 350 for his work (!), and had "planted" it in Paris "as an artistic trap for the express purpose of humbling French pride." But French pride is a plant of stubborn

growth. The Louvre authorities never did admit that they had been taken in. As a quattro-cento work they had bought it, and as quattro-cento it should remain. The poor artist, whose poverty had originally compelled him to make frauds for a dealer, but whose skill under more fortunate auspices might have brought him fortune and legitimate fame, died of a low fever at the age of thirty-eight, broken-hearted from disappointment at his non-recognition.

In the South Kensington Museum is a beautiful marble bust of "Lucrezia Donati," described now as nineteenth century, and by Bastianini. It was bought for £84, and is cheap at the price, although it has been ousted into an obscure place opposite the refreshment room. There are also there a "Savonarola," bought for £328 9*s.* 4*d.*, another male head, which was given, and a "Dante," which has been lent.

The same writer in "The Nineteenth Century" suggests that it was Giovanni Freppa who commenced the frauds in "majolica" ware about the year 1856. He allied himself with a young chemist of Pesaro, who at last succeeded in imitating the celebrated ruby-lustre of Maestro Giorgio. Freppa undertook to "plant out" these apparently fine old specimens with local dealers, farmers, peasants, and other agents in the neighbourhood of Pesaro and Urbino, where real old specimens would naturally be found. Now Freppa had an ally, a Captain

Andreini, a retired officer in Florence, who also dealt in works of art. He had not told him the secret of his new venture in lustre-ware. One day the captain in great excitement brought him a splendid specimen which he said he had unearthed in a little village of the Romagna. He asked Freppa 1,000 francs for his prize. "To the captain's utter disappointment and surprise Freppa not only did not rise to the occasion, but even displayed an inexplicable coldness—the very reverse of his usual style and conduct. Giovanni, in fact, had immediately recognized one of his own children, so to speak, and he was so taken aback and annoyed at the *contretemps* that his usual *sangfroid* deserted him in this emergency. Determined not to repurchase his own property at an exorbitant price (which after all would have been his best policy), he unwisely depreciated the precious *trouvaille*, and in the heat of discussion unwittingly let it appear that he even doubted its authenticity." The enraged captain determined to expose the fraud by an action at law, even at the expense of his own reputation as a connoisseur. The result was a compromise. "They were too useful to each other to remain permanently estranged. The Italian public were, nevertheless, duly enlightened; they laughed a great deal at Giovanni and the captain, but probably did not think much the worse of either of them in the long run."

The same writer informs us that the ware of Bernard Palissy, made of pipeclay, and orna-

mented with shells, lizards, fish, ferns, and leaves, is easily imitated, and that Palissy himself had imitated in earthenware the embossed pewter of François Briot, who lived at the same time, in the second half of the sixteenth century. A dish in imitation of Palissy's copies of Briot was brought for sale to a connoisseur. It had been broken in pieces and carefully put together again. At the back was an apparently ancient impression of the seal of a former possessor. It seemed an entirely genuine work. Fortunately it was again broken by accident, and the wax seal becoming detached, revealed a manufacturer's mark of a modern French pottery. Finding it impossible to erase this mark, which was stamped in beneath the glaze, the man who had tried to sell it had covered it with a fabricated wax seal, which, he had argued, would naturally never be removed.

For an English fraud, the great fabrication of Sèvres china is worthy of mention. Shortly after the restoration of the monarchy in France an astute English dealer bought up the entire remaining stock of *pâte tendre* china, which had for twenty years ceased to be made at Sèvres. He bought up perhaps some thousands of pieces in the white, and requiring the addition of the coloured ornament. He was lucky enough to discover the one man capable of executing this, and he was a Quaker working in the Staffordshire potteries. For years the two connived to sell their concocted wares, which still frequently are found at art sales as a trap to

those unacquainted with the story of this fraud. This Staffordshire Quaker was so clever that he could even add additional ornament to genuine pieces, and thus enhance their value.

But we must desert the branch of pottery, and turn to other things. About the same time there flourished a dealer whose special line was that of false illuminated missals. M. Shapira is not the only manufacturer of MSS. whose tricks have been exposed. Living in the palmy days of miniature painting, before photography had swamped the art, he had plenty of clever workmen at his call, who besides making false miniatures of Hilliard, Oliver, and Cooper, would decorate his new parchments or improve inferior old ones. Unluckily the bursting of a sewer flooded the room in which he kept his manuscripts, each in a separate tin case, and "it is recorded that the tin cases went off with the report of pistol-shots, when the water, causing the vellum leaves of the books to swell out, burst them violently asunder."

There is a touching innocence amongst the uninitiated which makes them regard the endless supplies of spurious furniture and plate with unabated faith. Wardour Street is not now, as formerly, the chief emporium of "old oak," though we have met a young married couple who informed us lately that, having been given a cheque wherewith to buy a piece of "old oak," they had gone to Wardour Street because it was "well known to be the best place" for articles of that description. The provinces

have, however, "distanced Wardour Street in cunning imitations, with the exact colour of time-stained oak, its shrunken and fibrous surface-texture, and the meanderings of the worm-tracks on its surface."

In plate at the present time a thriving trade is being carried on. People must still be making wedding presents of little bits of Queen Anne plate, as if every householder in that worthy queen's reign had his sideboard loaded with genuine silver. If they would consult such a work as Mr. W. Cripps's "Old English Plate," they would learn that as early as 1327 a goldsmith's guild was formed because dishonest persons were becoming so plaguy skilful in coating tin with silver, and making false work of gold, "in which they set glass of divers colours, counterfeiting right stones." The system of hall-marking plate was introduced to cope with fraud and preserve a right standard of gold and silver. In these present days, to quote Mr. Cripps, "the amateur . . . will find that the modern forger scorns to be at the trouble of transposing or adding—call it what you will—genuine old hall-marks to modern plate. He boldly fashions antique plate, marks and all. . . . How shall we distinguish the real from the spurious? Well, one chance is that our inquirer finds, in nine cases out of ten, that the forger has not learned his lesson thoroughly." He will put on a piece of plate a certain maker's name, and add to it "a date-letter of a year that had elapsed long before the adoption and regis-

tration by that maker of the particular mark in question."

That is all very well in matters of plate, but with old jewellery, which it is often impracticable to hall-mark on account of its delicacy, even if it were compulsory, there is no such protection, as the writer himself well knows. We have before us at this moment what purports to be a Portuguese peasant jewel of the type made at Oporto during the eighteenth century. It is distinctly inferior in design and treatment to several finer specimens of the same kind with which we are acquainted, but a well-known expert has declined to say whether it is a fraud or simply a late specimen made when this particular art was commencing to decline. In the case of bronzes, the "patina," or surface which time has given them, is a safe test with connoisseurs. When the Italian medallists of the early part of the sixteenth century reproduced antique coins, and even made new ones of their own, this question of the "patina" was a difficult one to deal with. The present fabricators in Paris and Florence of casts or "surmoulages" from Italian Renaissance portrait-medallions are troubled by the want of "patina," not to mention the shrinkage after casting, which always makes the sham slightly smaller than its original prototype. But with gold objects there is no difficulty about "patina," for the simple reason that gold does not take a "patina" at all. Neither does the colour of gold serve as a test, for unless the object is made of pure gold,

which alone has a natural lustre, and is too soft for most purposes, it has, both in the case of an original or a fraud, when completed, to be coloured or gilt anew.

Perhaps one of the most ingenious frauds ever perpetrated was in the matter of a splendid crucifix of early date, which originally belonged to a cathedral in Hungary. It was given to a jeweller to repair. He first made a copy, and then skilfully transplanted parts of the original to the new cross, and from the new to the original in turn, until it was practically impossible to accuse either of being genuine. That which he left the most original of the two, he sold to a nobleman in Italy, whence it eventually found its way to London, where it has recently been exhibited.

In Vienna are made many rough imitations of Renaissance jewellery. Placed side by side with genuine work they would be easily detected, for the enamelling, which is done on silver gilt, is of a very poor colour. Gold is the necessary ground for the production of the most brilliant ruby enamel. These imitations look too inferior to deceive any but the ignorant.

It is, however, possible for a jewel to look too fine, and fall unjustly under suspicion by reason of its grand appearance. There has been exhibited lately a large German pendant with a body of mother-of-pearl, decorated with a dragon's head in silver gilt, enamel, and precious stones. It was bought by its owner at a celebrated sale in 1848. Wishing to sell it, he

left it with a dealer, who said he could easily obtain a large sum for it; but the sale hung fire, and at last it leaked out that the jewel was suspect. Never was greater injustice done. It was a unique specimen, larger than is usual even with German precious metal work. Its uncommonness had caused the dealers, whose knowledge is as a rule but inadequate, to class it in the ranks of the "duffers."

Space will not allow us to pursue this subject further. Collectors of books of drawings by the old masters, of engravings, of ivories, of the thousand and one little objects upon which the artist has employed his invention and perseverance, could tell us tales of imposture without end. Enough has been said to impress upon those who have not considered the subject, and for whom these chapters are written, the maxim "Caveat emptor."

Since this chapter was written one of the most notable artistic frauds of recent times has been perpetrated. The authorities of the Louvre have recently purchased a so-called golden tiara of the Scythian King Saitapharnes for £10,000. Dr. Bürges, of the Vienna Museum, it now leaks out, had been offered the tiara and had declined it. It is at once interesting and comforting to our national self-respect to know that a similar tiara was offered to the authorities of the British Museum, but was refused on the grounds that the inscription did not agree in style with the tiara itself. Now comes Professor Furtwängler,

the great German expert, and decides against it as a vulgar imposture. He claims to be able to point out the published sources from which the medley of anachronistic ornament has been borrowed. Some clever workman in a small town named Otschakow in South Russia is suspected of the manufacture.

The huge price paid for this gold ornament, and the ability of the experts upon whom it has been foisted, render this last imposition memorable indeed. It might, however, be well still to preserve an open mind upon the subject. Too hasty conclusions may be refuted.

CHAPTER V.

ART TREASURE TROVE.

It is curious to reflect upon the extraordinary carelessness of our forerunners. We owe them a debt of gratitude for this same fault of character, for it has resulted in a legacy of objects of art which is not to be despised. We do not mean to impute carelessness to them as their chief characteristic, for we have elsewhere too much reason to credit them with a prominent bump of destructiveness. It is, however, remarkable, that after showing a business-like insight into the relative worth for themselves of works of art, they have often either utterly neglected many things of immediate pecuniary value, or else hidden them away with a peculiar careful forgetfulness which has had the most beneficial results for us. The numismatist has often had reason to congratulate himself upon the discovery of some forgotten hoard concealed in a vase, which, after eluding the vigilance of eager relatives and lying hidden for fifteen hundred years or more, has been found half-revealed one day under a hedge, as if it had been placed there but half-an-hour before. Or else in a field within the space of a few feet a whole collection

will be discovered when by chance the ploughshare has cut its furrow more deeply than usual. Who dropped the pailful of coins found at Hexham in Northumberland, and now in the British Museum, it is impossible to say. Perhaps it could tell a tale of sudden attack by some half-hearted robber, who fled in horror at the deed he had committed, and by neglecting his booty left the crime without apparent motive. On the other hand, perhaps it could tell no such tale! We are left at any rate with a large field of conjecture, and the solid fact that a large amount of our artistic treasures in the precious metals has been discovered precisely in this fortuitous way. It is quite intelligible that sculpture and pictures and objects of art whose value depends upon intellectual appreciation should see the light after years of obscurity, just as ivories are found uninjured because the plunderer of old time found no use or value in the panels of a diptych. He cast it carelessly aside after he had wrenched off its gold or silver mounts for the melting-pot. Thanks to its comparative hardness, it survives for later generations. But that objects made entirely of the precious metals should one day reveal themselves by the roadside to the first comer is subject for congratulation indeed.

The "treasure of Hildesheim," which consists of drinking-cups, dishes, ladles, fragments of tripods and handles of vases, all in silver of a fine Roman period, is a case in point. It was found in 1869. Some German soldiers were digging a trench under the hill above the city,

and throwing up butts for rifle shooting. How the plate came there is a mystery. It is no doubt part of the camp service of some Roman commander, which, as the Romans had no station at Hildesheim, had been captured, perhaps, by some German, and by him abandoned when pressed by an enemy.

If the story of these treasures, which are so obviously Roman, is an historical enigma, there is a greater mystery still attached to the "treasure of Petrossa," now in the museum of antiquities at Bucharest. This consists of vessels of pure gold, originally set with stones. They were found in 1837 on the banks of a tributary of the Danube by some peasants, who cut them up and concealed the fragments. It is a mixed booty, for there are dishes, ewers, a piece of armour, a collar or torque, and brooches, showing a well-known form of ornament difficult to assign to a particular nationality.

No one would anticipate the discovery by the wayside of not merely one, but many crowns of gold, except in a fairy story. Yet, in 1858, some Spanish peasants travelling near Toledo found a treasure of no less than eleven crowns of gold set with precious stones. As usual they cut them up, but someone who recognized that they had more than a mere gold value bought them up and took them to Paris. Once there, they found their way to the museum of the Hôtel de Cluny. There were three crosses besides, and an engraved emerald. One of the crowns has the Gothic name of Suinthila, who

reigned from 621-631, another that of Recesvinthus, 649-672. They were mostly votive offerings, but one or two might have been actually worn. These crowns are known as the "treasure of Guarrazar." Of somewhat barbaric appearance, they excite our impotent curiosity to an extreme degree. We long to know the whole story how they came to be buried in the earth, and who was the freebooter who made such splendid loot and left it all uncared for.

Perhaps, however, it is well that something should be left to the imagination, and that every artistic treasure should not have such a pedigree attaching to it as has the gold cup which was acquired in 1892 for the British Museum. This was probably made to be presented to Charles V., "The Wise," of France, who was born on the feast of St. Agnes, January 21st, 1337. He died in 1380, and in 1391 the cup was given by his brother, Jean, Duc de Berry, to his nephew, Charles VI., in whose possession it remained till 1400. From Charles VI. it came to his grandson, Henry VI., King of England, who possessed it in 1449-1451, when it was included in schedules of plate to be pledged for loans. It figures in the inventories of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth, and in documents of James I., by whom it was given with much other plate to Don Juan Velasco, Duke de Frias and Constable of Castille, when he came to conclude a treaty of peace between England and Spain. The Constable gave it, in 1610, to the nunnery of Santa Clara de Medina de Pomar, near Burgos. A

few years ago it suffered the ultimate fate which attends the treasure of monasteries. The abbess sent it for sale to Paris, where it was bought by Baron Pichon. Finally Messrs. Wertheimer purchased it, and generously ceded it for the same price to the public-spirited subscribers who helped to buy it for the nation. There is still scope for the play of the imagination in guessing as to the motives which thus passed this beautiful cup from hand to hand, but after all there is more genuine romance attaching to the unrecorded story of the crowns of Suinthila and Recesvinthus.

We have not time to relate all the stores of objects in the precious metals which chance has preserved. The brooch of Tara is an epitome of the knotted Celtic ornament in which the Irish goldsmiths of the seventh century excelled. Christianity was introduced into Ireland about 400 A.D. The Northmen invaded Ireland in the eighth and ninth centuries, and swept away every vestige of church plate and jewellery they could find. This splendid brooch, one of the few remnants left by those invasions, might have been dropped by a careless pirate as he hastened down to regain his long low galley. A peasant child picked it up on the seashore in 1850.

There is in the British Museum the silver service found in 1883 at Chaourse in France, consisting of a set of thirty-six vases of different shapes, adorned with niello and gilding. There is the collection of silver statuettes found near Macon on the Saône in 1764, and the portrait

bust of Antonia, wife of Drusus, found along with "a large treasure of silver vases," at Boscoreale, near Pompeii, in 1895.

Our contention that there was much carelessness displayed by our ancestors is surely not unfounded. Else why should the silver ingots, jewels, and coins of Saxon kings, "evidently stored as bullion," have been left at Cuerdale in Lancashire from A.D. 910 to 1840? Why should the ring of Ethelwulf, King of Wessex, have been found at Laverstock in Hampshire, and that of his daughter Ethelswitha, Queen of Mercia, in Yorkshire?

The wonderful variety of objects which are discovered in tombs must be counted by us as art treasure trove, for places of ancient burial are often found by chance. It is only within the last few years that Coptic cemeteries in Egypt have been lighted upon, and the mummies despoiled of their shrouds, which display perhaps the earliest remaining specimens of ancient embroidery. The tomb of the ancient Egyptian was painted with scenes descriptive of his life. By his side were laid figures of stone, wood, earthenware, or wax, called Ushabti, or "Answerers," to perform the behests of the dead in his sojourn under ground. For the refreshment of the corpse were alabaster vessels filled with wine, food, and ointments. Close to the bier were laid what the dead person most prized during life, and funeral gifts of relatives and friends. Thanks to this practice, we know far more about the habits and history of ancient nations

than we should ever have learnt if their cemeteries had been left unrifled.

From the Greek tombs have been gathered in large part the vases which adorn the British Museum. The Greeks also buried bronzes, armour, weapons, mirrors, caskets, brooches, armlets, and musical instruments, such as lyres and flutes. Doubtless in earlier ages the actual property of the deceased was buried with him, but human nature was not long in asserting itself, and so we find that many of the bronze and gold ornaments are mere undertaker's ornaments, as thin as possible. More ancient civilizations than that of the Greeks had practised this shabby economy. The tombs of a race which held sway in Egypt during the eighth dynasty, nearly 3000 B.C., about thirty miles north of Thebes, have lately been discovered by Professor Flinders Petrie. The bodies were buried with a pot of ashes and a jar of sweet-scented fat. The saving spirit of relations had prompted them to deceive the dead, just as the Greek undertaker foisted off upon him a flimsy jewel. The pots in some instances were filled with earth, which was concealed by the merest layer of fat.

After all, the holes and corners of a great city are as fit and genuine places of treasure to the collector as the forgotten tomb or the suddenly exposed hiding-place by the wayside. Though the fact of the existence of a work in some unfrequented byway be known to a few, ignorance neglects it till knowledge makes it

treasure trove. In the days of the Italian Renaissance there were great searchings after the beauties of the antique. We have the story of the discovery of the famous Laocoon. Francesco, the son of Giuliano da San Gallo, describes how Michel Angelo was almost always at his father's house, and, coming there one day, he went, at San Gallo's invitation, to the ruins of the Thermæ of Titus. "We set off all together, I on my father's shoulders. When we descended into the place where the statue lay, my father exclaimed at once, 'That is the Laocoon of which Pliny speaks.' The opening was enlarged so that it could be taken out, and after we had sufficiently admired it, we went home to breakfast." The temperate enthusiasm of the youthful son of the architect San Gallo is amusing as expressed in the last phrase, but the excitement of scholars and art lovers at the discovery of a statue which Pliny describes was so great that more than one poem was written in its praise.

Good fortune has brought to light two of the works ascribed to Michel Angelo himself. The so-called "Cupid" in the South Kensington Museum was discovered some forty years ago hidden away in the cellars of the Gualfonda Gardens at Florence, by Professor Miliarini and the Florentine sculptor Santarelli. The "Entombment" in the National Gallery has no pedigree to pronounce it authentic. It was discovered by a Mr. Robert Macpherson in a dealer's shop in Rome in 1846. It was completely painted

over. He had it cleaned, and the under-surface then disclosed was ascribed to Michel Angelo.

There is no knowing where or when artistic treasures may turn up; in churches and hotels, in barracks or in pawn-shops, the unsuspected may be found. Many a drawing by the old masters has been discovered in provincial book-shops or on the stalls on the Quai Voltaire at Paris. They have been found between the leaves, or even pasted in to form part of the binding of some dusty tome. In the lumber-rooms of ancestral houses have been found, stacked away, pictures, furniture, and china worth far more than the showy stuff which graces the state-rooms below. Some new young wife has come to reign. Her proud husband has refurnished the house to do her honour. Fashion has pronounced the doom of all the old tables, cabinets, and faded hangings; they are banished out of sight until a hundred years after, on some wet day, the fancy takes a younger generation to explore the garrets. Then, if there is one amongst the party who has the collector's insight, he tells the welcome news that there is a fortune in the attics. The portrait by Gainsborough of Mrs. Graham, which is the pride of the Edinburgh Gallery, was walled up for years by the sorrowful husband, who could not bear to see his dead wife's portrait. One of the finest portraits of Queen Elizabeth has been lately found in the garrets of the Fine Art Gallery in Siena. The picture was found rolled up and partly eaten away by rats. Pictures and other

works of art may be said to vegetate for years until the discerning eye discovers and sets a value on them. Some time ago there was a fine game piece by Snyders in a room of a hotel at Greenwich, in which hundreds of visitors had sat to eat their whitebait. At last came one with a knowledge of Snyders and a retentive memory. Twenty years after, a notice of the sale of the furniture and effects of that hotel was put into his hands by chance; he remembered the picture, sent down a man to bid, and bought it for fifty shillings, "including frame."

A man of this stamp, and a great treasure hunter, was Ralph Bernal, whose fine collection was sold in 1855. He was one of those who have a genius for finding out what is artistically valuable in unlikely places. He was, in fact, a born connoisseur, and many curious things came into his hands. In the British Museum now lies what is known as "King Lothaire's Magic Crystal." It is a circle, four inches in diameter, engraved with a representation of the story of Susannah and the elders, and the words, "Lotharius Rex Franc. fieri jussit." The degrees of knowledge which exist amongst dealers and collectors are exemplified by the successive prices paid for this curious relic. It was found in an old curiosity shop in Brussels, the owner of which valued the crystal at ten francs. He sold it to a well-known Bond Street dealer, who thought it was not worth to him more than £10. Ralph Bernal bought it at this price, and when his collection was dispersed the talisman of

Lothaire went to the British Museum for the round sum of £267. Bernal was never more pleased than when he obtained a bargain from a dealer who had knowledge of his subject. The late Mr. Redford tells us how one day Bernal entered Colnaghi's shop in Pall Mall, and found the late Dominic Colnaghi, who was one of the best experts in his line, engaged in turning over a heap of prints bought at a sale. Glancing over his shoulder, Bernal spied a proof of Hogarth's "Midnight Modern Conversation," and said carelessly, "You seem to have got a good impression there; what will you take for it?" Colnaghi, busy searching for better things, said, without looking at the print, "Three guineas; shall I send it home for you?" "No, I'll take it with me," said Bernal, who quickly rolled up the print, and walked out of the shop chuckling at the idea of having got the rare early impression on which the word modern is spelt "moddern." When this proof was purchased for the British Museum, £81 was the price demanded.

Such exploits made the dealers wary in their negotiations with Bernal. He came to think at last, probably with some truth, that they concealed their best things from him. Calling one day at the shop of Messrs. Town and Emmanuel, he caught sight of Mrs. Town hastily shuffling something out of view into a drawer. Bernal was immediately alive with the keen instinct of the collector. "What have you got there, Mrs. Town?" he said; "let me see it, let me see it."

"Oh no, sir! it is nothing that you would care about," she replied. "Come, come," said Bernal, "I know it is something good." Whereupon the bashful lady displayed to the eager eyes of the virtuoso a pair of her husband's old socks, which she had been assiduously darning when their inquisitive client entered.

CHAPTER VI.

FAMOUS COLLECTIONS.

The history of collecting in England during the last hundred years is marked by certain great events which have occurred at irregular intervals. The dispersal of famous collections, though giving rise to a passing regret, affords a stimulus to enthusiasts, who form out of the scattered fragments of some great gallery the groundwork of other collections which in their turn may perhaps become famous. A dozen great collections, called either after their owners' names, or that of the great house which contained their treasures, are familiar to connoisseurs. Between these great landmarks is a packing of less familiar and often anonymous collections, which contained a few fine things, but not enough to make them celebrated. In the second half of the eighteenth century, and especially during the "Reign of Terror," a new class began to vie with the noble owners of a former generation. These were men whom the chances of their vocation in life had thrown in the nick of time into those foreign places where works of art were to be bought. To the fact that Sir W. Hamilton was for thirty-seven years

Minister Plenipotentiary at Naples, the British Museum had owed a large part of its magnificent collection of Greek and Roman antiquities. They were bought by special vote for £8,400 in 1772. The Elgin marbles had similarly been collected during the Earl of Elgin's embassy at Constantinople, and were purchased for the Museum in 1816 for £35,000. At and after the Revolution less known collectors had through residence abroad the same chances of forming important collections. Mr. Day was an artist studying in Rome when the city was in the possession of the French army. He thus had the chance of buying cheap in those troublous times fine pictures from the Colonna and Borghese collections. A Mr. Udny was British consul at Leghorn, where he bought many pictures, and sent them home to a brother in England. They made an important sale in 1804. Mr. John Trumbull, attached in 1795 to the American Legation in Paris, had exceptional chances of buying the pictures of the proscribed nobility.

Such men bought pictures cheap because they had unique opportunities. Collectors vary in their ways, just as other men differ in the pursuit of other hobbies. Some will pay any price for the best examples. Some on principle never pay much for anything. The worthy Samuel Rogers, whom one might have expected to be as free-handed as poets often are, never paid more than £250 for anything in his collection. He, however, began collecting in 1816,

when objects of art were comparatively cheap, and it must be remembered that he ingeniously combined second-rate poetry with the careful trade of banking. He was the typical connoisseur of his day, and left a collection which was sold in 1850 for £42,000. At the munificent end of the scale was Gillott, the penmaker. He was never afraid of paying a high price, and accosted Turner in the proper way when he offered to exchange pictures with the great painter. "I have my pictures in my pocket," said Gillott, and he waved some £1,000 notes in the artist's face. "You seem to be a sensible sort of fellow," said Turner; "come in and have a glass of sherry."

The headings of old catalogues refer to collectors and collections in phrases which at the present time are beginning to sound curious to our ears. Sometimes they are "purchased from the most distinguished cabinets here and on the continent," or else the works of art are "the undoubted property of a nobleman, selected about fifty years ago with great taste and at a most liberal expense." They may be "pictures of the very distinguished class recently consigned from Italy," or "of a nobleman brought from his seat in the country," perhaps to pay off gambling debts contracted in town. There may be concealed some sad story of misfortune behind a colourless expression, such as "the collection of a gentleman who has left off the pursuit of pictures," or the tale is half revealed by the more definite phrase, "the collection of an

emigrant gentleman," which suggests in one word the uprooting of old families and the ruthless destruction of ancestral homes.

The descriptions of these old catalogues have an old-world flavour. We are offered for sale "two neat landskips," "a fine shipping," or "a curious limning." We may have for a price "a curious vase from the antique with a Bacchanalian of boys," or "a picture of the King of Spain by Titian as big as the life." If interiors are more to our taste, there is waiting for us "an inside of a church very rare and good, and the figures are done by Polemburge." Richard Symonds's diaries, preserved in the Egerton MSS., regale us with such notes as these of the pictures of Charles I.: "St. Jerome whole body sitting in a cave, leaning on a rock, a lion by him, and is bound about with cords and almost naked," wherein at first sight there lurks a puzzling ambiguity. Sometimes he amuses his reader with a smack of Italian, such as "a strange ritratto (portrait) of a great thin old bald-head given to the king by Sir H. Wotton."

Disintegration and accretion are the two conflicting influences in the world of art. Like the circulation of the blood in the human, there is a continual state of flux in the collecting system. It is interesting to trace the course of single particles from one country to another, until sometimes they return to the self-same point from which they last commenced their circuit.

We have referred elsewhere to that thorough

and discriminating connoisseur, King Charles. After his execution tradespeople and hangers-on of the court obtained possession of many of his pictures, gems, and jewels, and sold them for very little to those who had greater knowledge, if not more honesty. Cromwell himself purchased at a fair price, and stepped in effectually to prevent the farther "embezzling" of the pictures. They were sold to such buyers as Don Alonzo Cardeñas, for the King of Spain; to Christina of Sweden, who took medals, jewels, and pictures; to the Archduke Leopold, Governor of the Netherlands, for the Belvedere Gallery of Vienna. To the Duke of Alva was sold the famous Correggio, "Venus, Mercury, and Cupid," which has found its way back to our National Gallery. Through M. Eberhard Jabach, a banker and amateur of pictures, many came to Cardinal Mazarin, the Duke de Richelieu, and Louis XIV., and may now be found in the Louvre. Sold later to Sir Robert Walpole, many of Charles's pictures went from the Houghton collection to the Empress Catherine of Russia, to find a home in the Hermitage. While some repose at Florence, where perhaps they were originally painted, others, which were recovered by Charles II., and escaped the fire at Whitehall in 1697, may be seen again at Hampton Court and Windsor.

Buchanan's "Memoirs of Painting" tells us the story of another great landmark, the Orleans Collection. In 1639 the Cardinal Richelieu ceded to his king the palace which we now know

as the Palais Royal. Louis XIV. handed it over to Philip, Duke of Orleans, his only brother, afterwards Regent of France. He formed a splendid gallery of 485 pictures, acquired from thirty collections. At his death his son Louis succeeded. To please the priests who swayed him he ordered that all pictures of the nude should be destroyed or sold. Correggio's "Leda," which had been presented by Christina of Sweden, was cut into quarters, but Coypel, the director of the gallery, secreted the fragments and put them together. In 1755 it was bought for the King of Prussia and placed in Sans Souci. In 1792 Philip Egalité, "for the purpose of procuring money to agitate the national spirit, of which he always hoped ultimately to profit," sold all the pictures of the Palais Royal. Those of the Italian and French Schools were ultimately bought by M. Laborde de Mereville for 900,000 francs. He had commenced to build a superb gallery in the Rue d'Artois, "in which to place the collection he had preserved to France." The "Reign of Terror" ensued. M. de Mereville transported his collection to England, but misfortune dogged him. Some cause made him return to France, where he fell a victim to the guillotine. By the loss of France England gained. The Flemish, Dutch, and German pictures were also sold in 1792 by the Duke of Orleans to a Mr. Thomas Moore Slade, for 350,000 francs. By great management he "succeeded in having them sent to this country at the moment matters began in France to wear

the most serious aspect." The real buyers were Mr. Slade, Mr. Morland, Lord Kinnaird, and Mr. Hammersley. The Italian pictures of M. de Mereville had been consigned to a London house. Mr. Bryan, the dealer, but for whose discriminating purchases "this country," says Buchanan, "would now have been but very poor in works of art," bought them for the Duke of Bridgwater, the Earl of Carlisle, and the Marquis of Stafford, for £43,000. They selected what they wanted for their private collections, and made a large profit, nearly £40,000, by selling the remainder at Mr. Bryan's rooms in Pall Mall and "at the Lyceum in the Strand." A name important in the history of British collecting here emerges. Mr. Angerstein bought some of the most important pictures, including Sebastian del Piombo's "Raising of Lazarus." In 1824 this large picture and twenty-three others were bought for the National Gallery. "Until the arrival of the Orleans Collection," says Buchanan, "the prevailing taste and fashion had been for the acquisition of the pictures of the Flemish and Dutch schools; . . . a new turn was given to the taste for collecting in this country." Great was the belief also, in those days, in the influence of masterpieces upon contemporary painting. When Soult wished to sell the Murillos he had filched from Spain, "these pictures," said the marshal, "are capable of forming a revolution in the science of modern painting, and of creating a new school of art. Whole masses of pictures may be brought into position on the walls of a

gallery, but what will these avail without a few great leaders?" The military metaphor is characteristic of the great warrior and plunderer of galleries.

Any private collection from which pictures have been given to or bought for semi-public or national museums should be of interest. It was a curious concatenation of circumstances which led to the founding of the Dulwich Gallery. Des Enfans, or Desenfans, a French teacher of languages, merchant, and finally picture dealer, became a consul in London, and collected pictures for Stanislas II., King of Poland, when the French nobility were rushing to realize their property. Stanislas had intended to found an Academy of Art and National Gallery in Poland. The inevitable fate of that country prevented this laudable intention from being realized when Russia and Prussia partitioned Poland and Stanislas was dethroned in 1798. The pictures were left on the hands of Desenfans, who offered them for sale. He seems to have been of a somewhat pragmatical disposition, and to have found it necessary to fulminate in the preface of his catalogue against modern artists. He accused them of not caring for good art and not loving one another. There was a certain amount of truth which stung in both of these propositions. He had awakened the hostility of some of the painters, who could not be expected to rejoice at the sight of extravagant prices being paid for old masters. The influence of Benjamin West as President of the Academy was sufficient

to ruin the sale. Desenfans eventually left his pictures to Sir Francis Bourgeois, who, in his turn, bequeathed them to Dulwich College, with £10,000 to erect a gallery, and £2,000 for the care of the pictures. That delightful Watteau, "The Dance under a Colonnade," is one of the glories of this collection.

We can only refer briefly here to some of the great landmarks of collecting. In 1822 Beckford had intended to hold a great sale of the treasures of Fonthill. A catalogue was made, and the collection was to be sold at Christie's, when a Mr. Farquhar stepped in and paid £350,000 for Fonthill and most of its contents. This gentleman sold the collection he had bought on the spot. The sale lasted forty-one days. The lots comprised, amongst other things, Cardinal Wolsey's ebony chair; a state bed of ebony, with damask hangings, and a purple silk quilt worked with gold, which had belonged to Henry VII.; tables of verd-antique; cabinets of the time of Elizabeth and James I., and cabinets from Japan. A vase of the largest known block of Hungarian topaz, mounted in gold and diamonds, a present to Catarina Cornaro, was the work of Cellini. His favourite pictures were not sold by Beckford to Mr. Farquhar. In 1839 he disposed of three which he had kept back, and of which one was the "St. Catherine" of Raphael, for £7,350 to the National Gallery. Other parts of Beckford's collection came, through his daughter, to the Duke of Hamilton, and were sold in 1882.

The history of the Lawrence Collection is one of lost opportunities. Sir Thomas Lawrence died in 1830. In his will he referred to his magnificent collection with the words, "My collection of genuine drawings by the old masters, which in number and value I know to be unequalled in Europe." He offered them for £20,000, half of what they cost, first of all to George IV., and, if not accepted by him, then to the British Museum, Sir Robert Peel, or the Earl of Dudley. An attempt was made to bring about their purchase for the nation. The Academy headed a subscription with £1,000, but nothing came of it. Mr. Samuel Woodburn had been in the habit of buying for Lawrence, and Messrs. Woodburn eventually bought the collection for £16,000. They sold many drawings, of which some went to the King of Holland. In 1840 and the two following years efforts were again made to induce the Government to buy the residue, but with no effect. At last the majority of the Raphael and Michel Angelo drawings were bought for Oxford University. The King of Holland's drawings were sold in 1850. Mr. Samuel Woodburn bought many back, while others were purchased for the Weimar Gallery and the Louvre. Finally, the Woodburn Collection was disposed of in 1866, and Government at last purchased some of the drawings. Even then they missed many of the best, and several hundreds of pounds were returned to the Treasury—a piece of foolishness which also happened at the Bernal sale.

To return to chronological order, the next great sale was that of Horace Walpole's treasures from Strawberry Hill in 1842, to which we have referred elsewhere. It lasted ten days, and made a total of about £40,000, a mere fraction of what the collection would now fetch.

In 1848 came the "Stowe sale" of the Duke of Buckingham's collection, which lasted forty days, and brought in £75,000.

In 1855 an event occurred which will always be held in remembrance by amateurs of "bric-a-brac," as objects of art are sometimes irreverently called. The collection of Mr. Ralph Bernal was sold. From it the newly-formed museum now at South Kensington obtained some of its greatest treasures. Ignorant busybodies complained at the prices paid by the nation for majolica plates which would sell now for twenty times the really moderate sums they then fetched.

Large collections continue to come at intervals of a few years to the hammer. In 1871 the wonderful Peel Collection was added by private purchase to the National Gallery. In 1876 was the well-known Wynn Ellis sale, in which, together with some genuine pictures, were so many of doubtful authenticity. In 1882 came the monster sale of all, that of Hamilton Palace. The last treasures of Beckford were dispersed amongst the Duke of Hamilton's possessions. The sale lasted seventeen days, and some 2,213 lots fetched nearly £400,000.

A patriotic syndicate, formed by certain con-

noisseurs, goaded the Government into securing some of the best lots in the Fountaine sale of 1884. These gentlemen subscribed more than £12,000, and resold their splendidly selected purchases to the Government at the prices for which they were bought.

At the sale of the Marlborough Collection eleven masterpieces of painting were offered to the nation for £350,000. This was, perhaps, rather more than the authorities could be expected to pay at one fell swoop. The nation, however, rejoices in the Ansidei Raphael and Vandyke's equestrian portrait of Charles I., which were bought for £70,000 and £17,500 respectively in 1885. Since that time we have seen the Spitzer sale take place at Paris in 1892. Many English connoisseurs attended this, well knowing the quality of that clever dealer's cherished works of art. Provincial galleries, besides the national museums, have entered the lists at these great sales, and it is to be hoped that what they have bought will never be found amongst that class of objects of art which, as the late Mr. Christie once said, "are quite old friends, and a sort of annuity to the firm," so frequently do they recur in the auction-room.

It will thus be seen that the history of our splendid collections of the British Museum, the National Gallery, and the South Kensington Museum, is largely written in that of the public sale of collections. We should far exceed the limits of this chapter if we attempted to give any full account of the gradual and sagacious

formation of our national art treasure-houses. We must not, however, omit to mention that they would not be what they are but for the munificence of private benefactors. Men like the late Mr. Jones, whose splendid furniture and bric-a-brac given to South Kensington is still grouped together under his name; Mr. Henry Vaughan, who gave us Constable's "Hay Wain;" Sir A. W. Franks, and Mr. Fortnum, are but a few of those who have done so much to enrich our wonderful galleries.

CHAPTER VII.

PATRONS OF ART IN THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE.

Of the two periods in which, by general agreement, art has exhibited her greatest manifestations, the age of the finest Greek art, and that of the Italian Renaissance, the latter is the more satisfactory to deal with, both from the historian's and the collector's point of view. The remnants of Greek art which are left probably give us but a limited notion of the capacities of that wonderful race. There is a sense of sepulchral coldness bequeathed to us from the marble and bronze sculpture, the gems, the vases and small tomb ornaments which constitute the chief bulk of Greek art as we have it. The old writers speak with enthusiasm of the paintings of Zeuxis and Apelles. We are deprived of them. If the gold ornaments of the Greeks were magnificent in colour of precious stone and enamel, only traces of it are left. Charming as their little winged "victories" and necklets are, the unrelieved colour of the gold is somewhat monotonous. The indications of colour on their delightful terra cottas are faded for the most part, so that we can scarcely judge of their original effect. Their vases are of a peculiar tone, which

is out of harmony with almost everything but itself. They look well only by themselves, as if there still clung to them the aloofness of the tomb from which so many of them have emerged. We have not enough of their art left to enable us to do the Greeks full justice; consequently our estimate of them, based chiefly on their magnificent sculpture, leads us to cherish a conception of Greek art as sculpturesque and colourless, though the numerous tales that are told of the realism of the Greek painters leads us to suppose that they were acquainted with much more than the mere requirements of form. The incompleteness of our legacy in the history of Greek art and the art itself is a matter for perpetual regret.

Our position as regards the Italian Renaissance is different. We have most ample material, historical and artistic. Splendid architecture, pictures, and sculpture remain to us comparatively uninjured. Parallel to this we have the records of literary men who were friends of artists, the biographies of artists themselves, such as the inestimable life of Cellini, the lives of painters by a contemporary painter such as Vasari, and the reminiscences of faithful servants such as Michel Angelo's Ascanio Condivi. Such writers tell us of the enthusiasm with which the artists unearthed every fragment of antique ornament, and the untiring zeal with which they copied them. It was the natural outcome and counterpart of the excitement of students at the re-discovery of manuscripts when,

after 1453, the Greek refugees from fallen Constantinople flocked into Italy. To adorn and illustrate this great historical inheritance we have objects of art, fine and applied, of every kind in profusion and uninjured. While we are left suspecting that the Greeks may have been acquainted with numerous processes of which we have not examples left, there is not perhaps a single branch of art known to the men of the Renaissance of which examples are withheld from us.

Thus of these two great manifestations of art, while the one seems too cold for average human interest, the other is aglow with such life and colour, that unless we are careful we are apt, as regards the golden age of the Renaissance, to purge both artist and patron of worldly dross to an extent which they hardly deserve.

When we come to consider the period 1450-1550, we find many of those preconceived notions which we all like to possess very rapidly upset. From our historic recollections of Athens in the age of Pericles we have been accustomed to the idea that the highest culminations of artistic activity are reached in periods of untrammelled political liberty. Florence is the counterpart of Athens in the Italian Renaissance. Her air is not inferior in its effects to the pellucid atmosphere of Attica. "Florence is the place," says a poor painter of Perugia, "where above all others men attain to perfection in all the arts, but more especially in painting. The air of that city gives a natural quickness and freedom

to the perceptions of men, so that they cannot content themselves with mediocrity in the works presented to them, which they always judge with reference to the honour of the good and beautiful in art, rather than with respect to or consideration for the man who has produced them." In the artist, too, is generated by that fine air the desire for glory and honour. Yet while at Athens the golden age of art was the outcome of political liberty gained by citizens who scorned the pursuits of commerce, in Italy the freer cities did not excel in art, and Florence the paragon, at the height of her artistic glory, was enslaved by the Medici, who were bankers and merchants, the heads of a commercial establishment. Perpetual conspiracies failed because the populace was too enslaved to rise. "The facts of the case," says J. A. Symonds, "seem to show that culture and republican independence were not so closely united in Italy as some historians would seek to make us believe." The Italian despots disarmed their subjects and substituted a tax for military service. Then they proceeded to lay down arms themselves, to substitute diplomacy for warfare, and hold their states by craft and corruption. Lorenzo de' Medici developed "a policy of enervation," employing great artists to adorn popular festivals with the set purpose of keeping the citizens in good humour. War was carried on by means of the "condottieri," mercenaries who, though opposed to each other to-day, were as likely as not to be on the same side to-morrow.

"They adopted systems of campaigning which should cost them as little as possible, but which enabled them to exhibit a chessplayer's capacity for designing clever checkmates." The astonishingly beautiful ornamentation lavished upon arms and armour seems almost to suggest that the pomps of war were more present to the Italian mind than its grim realities. Though the condottieri occasionally let themselves loose upon defenceless populations, not till the invasion of the French under Charles VIII. did the Italians experience once more the hideous cruelties of war as carried on by Frenchmen, Spaniards, and Germans, whom they contemptuously classed all together as "barbarians." Until the invasion of the foreigner Italy lived almost in a fool's paradise of fine art and warfare of comparative mildness. Yet we must not imagine a golden age of art and innocence. Though war had for years spared Italy many of its terrors, we have to remember that art was flourishing while assassination and private vengeance were rampant. We read with horror of Lorenzino's hideous plot to murder Alessandro de' Medici. We feel sorry for Alessandro until we realize that he poisoned Ippolito, and was, if possible, worse than his assassin. These doings are a later specimen of what had been taking place in every Italian city. Such men were the patrons of artists, who were willing and obliged to work for any scoundrel.

We have to remember in the next place that when art flourished most, it was by no means as

the handmaid of religion. The day when artists painted for the Church with a single-minded devotion passed away when the revival of Greek learning, together with the re-discovery of antique art, awoke a new and natural sympathy for all that was sensuously beautiful. Painters and sculptors began to work with art mainly in view, no longer religion. The notable exceptions, who painted still with religious fervour uppermost, included only those who were attracted by the austere teaching of Savonarola, or frightened into monasteries by some horrid act of violence. "Perugino, the painter of placid pieties, was a man of violence." Single-minded purity of religious feeling in artistic matters could not exist when the great patrons, the popes and cardinals, were so often monsters of wickedness. "Let us enjoy the papacy," said Leo X., "since God has given it us." When a Fleming as Adrian VI. was pope for a short space, and condemned nearly every artistic manifestation, Vasari, in the cause of art, congratulates Providence, and the general public the doctor, upon the pope's demise.

It is impossible in a few pages even to sketch the complicated nature of Italian civilization at that day. General phrases must sum it up. "The Renaissance," says Symonds, "was so dazzling by its brilliancy, so confusing by its rapid changes, that moral distinctions were obliterated in a blaze of splendour, an outburst of new life, a carnival of liberated energies. . . . The national genius for art attained its fullest

development simultaneously with the decay of faith, the extinction of political liberty, and the anarchy of ethics." In a country in which every man did that which seemed right in his own eyes, it was no wonder that in art, as in conduct, an astonishing diversity was exhibited. This diversity was kept as a rule within the bounds of taste and style by the new appreciation and actual re-discovery of antique art.

To correspond with and help to produce and encourage this wonderful outburst of artistic energy was a long succession of rich patrons. In Florence the Medici, between the years 1434-1471, spent 663,755 golden florins upon alms and public works, of which 400,000 were supplied by Cosimo alone. His grandson, Lorenzo the Magnificent, who succeeded his father in 1469, had a splendid collection of antique sculptures in his garden at San Marco. He wished to raise sculpture in Florence to the level of painting, and placed Bartoldo, a follower of Donatello, in charge of the sculptures that he might help and instruct the young men who studied them. Lorenzo then asked Ghirlandaio, the painter, to select his most promising pupils and allow them to study in his gardens. Ghirlandaio sent Granacci and Michel Angelo. The story goes that Lorenzo first recognized the talents of Michel Angelo about a year after he came to the gardens, when he saw him polishing a piece of refuse marble which he had begged and carved into a copy of an antique Faun. He took him into his own household,

where the young man lived as an honoured guest or adopted son. Condivi relates how at dinner those who came first sat each according to his degree next the Magnificent, not moving afterwards for anyone who might appear. So it happened that the boy found himself often seated amongst men of the noblest birth and highest public rank. "All these illustrious men paid him particular attention, and encouraged him in the honourable art which he had chosen. But the chief to do so was the Magnificent himself, who sent for him oftentimes in a day, in order that he might show him jewels, cornelians, medals and such like objects of great rarity, as knowing him to be of excellent parts and judgment in these things." It is impossible to conceive circumstances more congenial or more conducive to the formation of the taste of the young genius. Unfortunately, after three years Lorenzo died, worn out at forty-four, and Michel Angelo lost a man who would have been a perfectly appreciative patron, though the artist's political sympathies were afterwards not with the family of the Medici. Piero, the son of Lorenzo, was a man of a different stamp. He cared little for art, and only sent for Michel Angelo when, in January, 1494, there was a heavy fall of snow in Florence, and he desired to have a colossal snowman modelled in the courtyard of the palace. It was quite natural that an old inmate of the household should help to amuse the family, though some writers have called the request an insult. Piero, however,

treated Michel Angelo with great kindness, and asked him back to live with him. Condivi's account proves that Piero was not of the same culture as his father. He "used to extol two men of his household as persons of rare ability, the one being Michel Angelo, the other a Spanish groom, who, in addition to his personal beauty, which was something wonderful, had so good a wind and such agility, that when Piero was galloping on horseback he could not outstrip him by a hand's-breadth." In November, 1494, Piero was driven from Florence by the supporters of Savonarola, and Michel Angelo had to look for new patrons elsewhere. His "Sleeping Cupid," fraudulently sold by a dealer as an antique, led to a brief connection with the unappreciative Cardinal di San Giorgio, and from him he passed on to Rome, where, in the service of successive popes, most of his life was spent. We have only space to sketch the general character of these men and their patronage by citing a few salient facts. A banker, Jacopo Gallo, introduced Michel Angelo to the Cardinal di San Dionigi, who was given his red hat by the Borgia Pope Alexander VI. For him Michel Angelo made the splendid "Pieta," the Virgin with the dead Christ in her arms, which established his fame. Before his cardinal's "Pieta" in 1503 lay in state the repulsive corpse of Alexander VI., which was shortly wrapped in an old carpet, and then with force of fists and feet crammed into a coffin that was too small for it, "without torches, without a

ministering priest, without a single person to attend and bear a consecrated candle." When such treatment was meted out to the corpse of a pope, it was not to be expected that much attention would be paid to the carrying out of their artistic intentions when interrupted by death. So we find that Michel Angelo's life-story is largely one of diverted energies on account of the whims and fancies of successive pontiffs. To them is due the fact that so much that he intended to perform came to naught. The republic of Florence, under Soderini as "Gonfalonier," has the credit of having commissioned one great statue, the "David," which is one of the few that remain to us complete. Of Soderini is told the well-known tale that illustrates the bluntness of a patron's perceptions. When the "David" was finished he took exception to the nose. Michel Angelo hid some marble dust in his hand, and let it fall while pretending to chip away at the statue. "Look at it now!" he presently said. Soderini replied, "Ah, now I am much more pleased with it. You have given the statue life." The patron who was in 1505 to commission a tomb which should enslave Michel Angelo for forty years, was Julius II., the pope who should have been a soldier. "We cannot but regret," writes Symonds, "the fate which drove Michel Angelo to consume years of hampered industry upon what Condivi calls 'the tragedy of Julius's tomb,' upon quarrying and road-making for Leo X., upon the abortive

plans at S. Lorenzo, and upon architectural and engineering works which were not strictly within his province." Julius II. died in 1513, and there ensues a long story of quarrels and new contracts with his successive executors, in each of which the first magnificent scheme of forty statues dwindles down more and more, until the tomb is completed in 1545 as it still exists, with the "Moses" as sole principal figure, and the rest of it not the actual work of Michel Angelo, but of Raphael da Montelupo. "My whole youth and manhood have been lost," wrote Michel Angelo, "tied down to this tomb." The popes who first interfered with its completion were Leo X. and Clement VII. It is difficult to understand why Leo X., the first pope of the house of Medici, has obtained so great credit for patronage of art as to give his name to an age. Julius II. was the projector of a new St. Peter's Church. Michel Angelo and Raphael had long made their fame when Leo was elected. His reign was a brief one of less than nine years, and "Rome owes no monumental work of art to his inventive brain."

A chorus of joy arose when his well-meaning but bigoted successor, Adrian VI., the foreigner who shut his eyes to art, died in less than two years. His doctor was hailed as "saviour of his country," and Giulio de' Medici succeeded as Clement VII. He was more in sympathy with Michel Angelo than Leo X. had ever been, and would have tied him to his interests by giving him an ecclesiastical benefice, just as

Leo was reported to have offered to make Raphael a cardinal. He was not a terrible and obstinate patron like Julius II., and could be dissuaded from his more foolish intentions, as when he proposed to have a colossus of forty cubits high on the piazza of S. Lorenzo. He had consideration for Michel Angelo when he fell ill in 1531, and besides issuing an interested brief, enjoining the sculptor only to work on the Medicean tombs, told him to select a workshop more convenient for his health. Cellini, however, gives the best picture of this pope. It is remarkable how anxious such patrons were to exploit every accomplishment they were told a clever man possessed. Wiser and less selfish men would have urged an artist to concentrate his energies upon what he felt to be his special vocation. Clement found that Cellini could play the flute. It was in vain represented that Cellini's business was that of a goldsmith and jeweller. The pope's reply was, "I am the more desirous of having him in my service, since he is possessed of one talent more than I expected." In like manner, though Michel Angelo had protested to Julius II. that he was not a painter, he was compelled to paint the roof of the Sistine Chapel. He asserted later that architecture was not his trade, but the Medici compelled him to build. Cellini becomes musician, artilleryman, and goldsmith to Clement VII. He melts down the pope's treasure in 1527, when Clement is besieged in the castle of St. Angelo. For nine fearful months the

ruffianly Spaniards and Germans practised every atrocity during the prolonged sack of Rome, while Clement helplessly watched it from the ramparts of the castle. The effects of their inhuman wickedness were indelibly impressed upon the minds of artists. Giovan Antonio Lappoli, the painter, was "grievously tormented by the Spaniards to the end that he might pay them a ransom." He escaped literally with nothing but the shirt upon his back. Peruzzi's fate was similar. Parmegiano was more lucky; he was only compelled to paint and draw for his less barbarous captors. The indolent Sebastian del Piombo, whose letters to Michel Angelo show him to have been of a cheerful disposition, writes to Michel Angelo after the events of 1527, "I do not yet seem to myself to be the same Bastiano I was before the sack. I cannot yet get back into my former frame of mind." Such were the later accompaniments of this golden age of art. Soon afterwards we find Clement commissioning Cellini for a button for the pontifical cape, after absolving him of a little peculation in the matter of the melted jewels, and appointing him stamp-master of the mint. The Holy Father is alternately bowed down to by Cellini for absolution, and reviled as a man whose word is not to be relied upon, and who shows the temper of a wild beast. That he could, indeed, be cruel enough was shown by his slowly starving to death, in the dungeon that Cellini feared so much, Fra Benedetto da Foiano, who had encouraged the patriots of

Florence to resist the Medici. He was succeeded in 1534 by Cardinal Farnese as Paul III. This pope requested Michel Angelo to enter his service. The artist saw that he should again be interrupted from the tomb of Julius II.; he therefore replied that he was not his own master. "It is thirty years," answered the pope in anger, "that I have cherished this desire, and now that I am pope may I not indulge it? Where is the contract? I mean to tear it up." He settled a new and restricted contract with the Duke of Urbino, nephew of Julius II., and appointed Michel Angelo sculptor and painter to the Vatican. Then was completed the fresco of the "Last Judgment," which so scandalized Paul's master of the ceremonies, but it was Paul IV. who commissioned "Il Braghettone," "the breeches-maker," to veil its nakedness. The rest of Michel Angelo's long life was expended in the service of three or four more popes. "Francis of Holland," a Portuguese miniature-painter, in his version of the great sculptor's conversations with his friend, the accomplished lady, Vittoria Colonna, represents him as saying, "I am bound to confess that even His Holiness sometimes annoys and wearies me by begging for too much of my company." Truly, from the time when Julius II. had a private drawbridge made from his apartment to enable him to visit the sculptor at his work, until the end of his life, Michel Angelo must have had his fill of papal patronage. Lesser dignitaries and private citizens were perhaps less exacting.

Such were the Cardinal da Bibbiena, who was so attached to Raphael as to consent to give him his niece in marriage, if the artist had not prematurely died. No sketch of the patronage of the Renaissance could omit the name of Agostino Chigi, who built the palace which was bought by the family of Farnese and called the Farnesina. He commissioned Raphael to decorate it with the story of Cupid and Psyche, which still exists. He was a man of the finest taste in art and literature, but even of him Michel Angelo complains that he appropriated two blocks of marble which cost the artist fifty golden ducats. Colossal fortunes were not made by artists in those days. In spite of all his papal patronage, Michel Angelo left but a moderate fortune, and did much work to his own loss. Writing in 1497 to his father, he says, "I have not yet settled my affairs with the cardinal, and I do not wish to leave until I am properly paid for my labour; and with these great patrons one must go about quietly, since they cannot be compelled." The pleasantest relations of art-lover and artist are, doubtless, those in which the patron is not too far exalted above the artist's rank. Many of the countless treasures of Renaissance art which we still have, and which gave most pleasure in the making to their creator and possessor, were probably the outcome of friendly intercourse between artists and their more intimate associates and appreciators.

CHAPTER VIII.

ROYAL PATRONS.

The attitude of reigning princes to art will always be a subject of interest. Those who concern themselves with the personal relations of kings and princes with their favourite painters or sculptors, may do so without incurring suspicion of mere king-worship. It is not a question of casual encouragement to this or that artist. The fashion set by a king is far-reaching in its consequences. Courtiers desire to stand well with their sovereign. No greater compliment can be paid by an astute subject than by taking, or affecting to take, pleasure in the artistic pursuits of a royal amateur. Art will always be to a certain extent the handmaid of fashion, and no one can sway the fashion more potently than a king or queen. We may feel tolerably certain that when Mithridates of Pontus, perhaps the earliest royal collector, set himself to the acquisition of gems, his courtiers were not behindhand. History gives us many examples of such influence. When Cardinal Farnese, afterwards Pope Paul III., commenced his architectural operations in the town of Castro, now demolished, palaces sprang up on

every hand. Rich nobles wished to gain credit with their pope, "for so it is," says Vasari, "that many seek to obtain favour for themselves by flattering the humours of princes."

Their superstitions led warlike monarchs in early days to promise votive offerings of churches, pictures, reliquaries, and what not, provided heaven would only vouchsafe them a happy issue to their campaigns. Later princes, like the Medici, fostered art, from love of it in part, but largely for political reasons. They were anxious to distract the attention of their subjects from the loss of true freedom by the beauty with which they adorned their splendid city of Florence. So when the Medici were exiled all artists felt the blow. When Duke Alessandro was assassinated, Vasari mourns the loss to art. When Leo X. died, Vasari uses the forcible phrase, "his death completely astounded the arts and artists both in Rome and Florence." When the pious but bigoted Adrian VI. succeeded to the chair of St. Peter, the artists were all secretly praying for his providential removal. "The arts and talents of all kinds were held in so little esteem, that if he had long retained the apostolic seat there would once more have happened in Rome what had taken place at a former time, when all the statues left by the Goths, the good as well as the bad, were condemned to the fire. Nay, Pope Adrian had already begun, perhaps in imitation of the pontiffs of those times, to talk of his intention to destroy the chapel of the divine Michel Angelo, declaring it to be

a congregation of naked figures, and expressing his contempt for the best pictures and statues. . . . The election of Clement VII. was thus as the restoration to life of many a timid and dejected spirit: many were the artists consoled and reassured by that event." Our good Vasari is prone indeed to regard the fathers of the Church as chiefly deserving of praise or blame in proportion as they alternately promoted or repressed the arts. His rejoicing when Providence also "was pleased to remove" those successors of St. Peter who, in Vasari's day, were inimical to painting and sculpture, is not disguised as becomes a good Catholic.

It is interesting to trace the story of art during the successive reigns of our own kings and queens. We have no glorious period to boast of such as the age of Leo X. and some of the succeeding popes. England was behindhand, and her artistic beginnings were small indeed. Our earliest records begin with Henry III. Walpole descants upon the simplicity of that king, who gave orders that the sheriff of Southampton shall cause the king's chamber wainscot in the castle of Winchester "to be painted with the same pictures as formerly." "This," says the writer, "is like the Roman general who threatened his soldiers if they broke any of the antique Corinthian statues that they should pay for having others made."

A supposed portrait of Richard II., said to have been painted in oil in 1377, gives ground for the very doubtful hypothesis that oil painting

was known in England before it was discovered by Van Eyck in 1410.

As late as Henry VI. affairs of art, as far as painting is concerned, were in a very primitive condition. "If Henry III. bespoke pictures by the intervention of the sheriff, under Henry VI. we were still so unpolished that a peer of the first nobility, going to France on an embassy, contracted with his tailor for the painter's work that was to be displayed in the pageantry of his journey. . . . If it is objected to me that this was mere herald's painting, I answer," says Walpole, "that was almost the only painting we had."

Art flourished little under succeeding kings until Henry VII., "who seems never to have laid out any money so willingly as on what he could never enjoy, his tomb ; . . . on that he was profuse."

Mabuse the Fleming was encouraged by him. That painter is said to have painted the portraits of Prince Arthur, Prince Henry, and Princess Margaret. This jovial artist was always in want of money. When he was in the service of the Marquis of Veren, Charles V. visited that nobleman. The marquis gave orders that all his household should be finely clothed in white damask. Mabuse secured the materials on pretence of making them up himself. He sold them for drink, and painted a paper suit in imitation. When the attention of the emperor was drawn to the equipment of the household of the marquis, Charles found that

of Mabuse the finest of all. It defied detection except by touch.

With Henry VIII. a nobler period begins. "The accession of this sumptuous prince brought along with it the establishment of the arts." He invited Raphael and Titian to come from Italy, but had to content himself with Torregiano and Girolamo of Trevisi. The latter he employed chiefly as an engineer, paying him 400 crowns a year. "Girolamo," says Vasari, "thanked God and his destiny for having permitted him to reach a country where the inhabitants were so favourably disposed to him." Evidently art was beginning to move in England; but alas for poor Girolamo, at the siege of Boulogne a cannon-ball cut him in two pieces as he sat on his horse, "and so were his life and all the honours of this world extinguished together!"

The great name of Holbein is Henry VIII.'s chief glory. Holbein, born at Basle, was introduced to Erasmus by Amerbach, a painter of that city. Either the Earl of Arundel or the Earl of Surrey is said to have advised him to go to England. Erasmus sent him with a letter to Sir Thomas More, and, as a present to the latter, his own portrait by Holbein, which he said was more like himself than the one drawn by Albert Durer. On the strength of his handiwork, and his sitter's testimonial thereto, Holbein was received into More's house, where he worked for some time. No one who has seen his splendid portrait of Sir Thomas, exhibited at the Old Masters' Exhibition of 1896, will

easily forget it. Holbein was destined soon to have a more exalted patron. Henry one day visited the chancellor, and robbed him of his *protégé*. He gave him a fixed salary of 200 florins, and a house to live in. In return Holbein painted his many portraits of Henry, his wives, and those also who declined the honour of his hand. On one occasion he fell into serious trouble. He had the temerity to throw an intruding nobleman downstairs. Horrified at what he had done in the heat of the moment, Holbein ran to the king, and besought his pardon for an offence which he did not specify. The king, it is said, promised to forgive him if he would tell the truth. When that was elicited matters at first looked serious for the painter. Presently in came the injured lord with a twisted tale. Then the king's wrath was turned upon him. He reproached him for his want of truth, and said, "You have not to do with Holbein, but with me. I tell you that out of seven peasants I could make as many lords,—but not one Holbein."

Those splendid Windsor drawings, which give many of us more pleasure than Holbein's painted portraits, were lost sight of for many years. Sold after Holbein's death into France, they were purchased and presented to Charles I. by a M. de Liancourt. King Charles exchanged them with the Earl of Pembroke for a Raphael. Pembroke gave them to the Earl of Arundel, the most noted connoisseur, except Charles I., of his time. From him they seem to have gone

to Henry, Duke of Norfolk, at whose death they are said to have been repurchased for the crown in 1696. After this they are said to have been forgotten, till Queen Caroline discovered them in a bureau in Kensington Palace, where they had lain unnoticed. To Horace Walpole belongs the credit of having suggested their reproduction, which was first done between 1792 and 1800. Now, through the aid of photographic process, they are familiar to all lovers of art.

For Henry Holbein did much besides painting. He was a universal genius. He was an architect, and modelled and carved portraits; he fashioned all kinds of ornaments for arms and plate; he was unsurpassed as a designer of jewels. As Francis I., Henry's rival, had patronized Benvenuto Cellini, so the English king had his Benedetto di Rovezzano, whose goldsmith's craft doubtless gained from the inventive genius of Holbein.

Of Torregiano, Henry's sculptor, and his tragic end we speak elsewhere. From 1516 to 1519 he was engaged on Henry VII.'s tomb, and then he left on his ill-fated journey to Spain, where the fact of his having been the servant of the Protestant King Henry perhaps sealed his fate.

Holbein was alive during the short reign of Edward VI., but Sir Antonio More was the chief painter of Mary's time. When she died he followed Philip in Spain, where, as Cumberland, in his "Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain," tells us, his fate, owing to his want of ceremony, hung on a hair. "This great artist

wanted discretion, and he met the king's advances with the same ease that they were made; so that one day, whilst he was at his work, and Philip looking on, More dipped his pencil in carmine, and with it smeared the hand of the king, who was resting his arm on his shoulder. . . . The king surveyed it seriously awhile; the courtiers, who were in awful attendance, revolted from the sight with horror and amazement. Caprice, or perhaps pity, turned the scale, and Philip passed the silly action off with a smile of complacency. The painter, dropping on his knee, eagerly seized those of the king, and kissed his feet in humble atonement for the offence, and all was well, or at least seemed to be so; but the person of the king was too sacred in the consideration of those times, and the act too daring to escape the notice of the awful office of the Inquisition; and they learnedly concluded that Antonio More, being a foreigner and a traveller, had either learned the art of magic, or more probably obtained in England some spell or charm wherewith he had bewitched the king."

We do not find that Rubens or Velasquez ever lapsed into such indiscretions as this.

But we must return to English history. Elizabeth had no great taste for anything but portraits of herself. In 1563 she issued a proclamation by which none but "a special cunninge paynter," perhaps Hillyard, is allowed to draw her portrait. All others were to be burned. Yet, in spite of this, says Walpole in a curious

phrase, "these painters seem to have flattered her the least of all her dependents." The most suggestive record of her interest in art is given by Sir James Melville in his memoirs. While on his visit to Elizabeth from Mary Queen of Scots, he saw much of the Queen of England. "She took me to her bedchamber and opened a cabinet wherein were divers little pictures wrapped within paper, and their names written with her own hand upon the papers. Upon the first that she took up was written, 'My Lord's picture.' I held the candle, and pressed to see the picture so named: she seemed loath to let me see it; yet my importunity prevailed for a sight thereof, and I found it to be my Lord of Leycester's."

It was well for the arts, says Walpole, that King James I. had no disposition to them; he let them take their own course. Mytens was his painter. He was one of those who portrayed Jeffery Hudson, the smallest man in England, appropriately born at Oakham, the chief town of the smallest county. This little creature, who never grew to more than eighteen inches high till he was thirty, and then shot up to three feet nine, was the butt of the whole court. One day he was provoked beyond measure by a Mr. Crofts, whom he challenged to fight a duel. Crofts came to the rendezvous with a squirt. The dwarf was so enraged that a real duel took place, and Hudson killed his opponent at the first shot. Vandyke has also placed the little fire-eater's features upon record. The story

of his life is romantic, and may be found in Walpole's "Anecdotes." We have referred to it because of the fashion that seemed to prevail for having the portraits of dwarf favourites painted, both in the courts of England and of Spain. Velasquez has left a whole series. It is difficult to account for the subject on the score of inherent attractiveness. When Vandyke introduces Hudson into a portrait of Henrietta Maria it is perhaps as a foil to the loveliness of the queen. Perhaps, however, a dwarf was regarded as at least as worthy of commemoration as the big dog that appears in the portrait of the children of Charles I.

With Charles I. came our only royal connoisseur. "If Charles," says Gilpin in his "Western Tour," "had acted with as much judgment as he read, and had shown as much discernment in life as he had taste in the arts, he might have figured amongst the greatest princes. Every lover of picturesque beauty, however, must respect this amiable prince, notwithstanding his political weaknesses. We never had a prince in England whose genius and taste were more elevated and exact. The amusements of his court were a model of elegance to all Europe; and his cabinets were the receptacles only of what was exquisite in sculpture and painting. None but men of the first merit in their profession found encouragement from him, and those abundantly. Inigo Jones was his architect, and Vandyke his painter. Charles was a scholar, a man of taste, a gentleman, and a Christian. He

was everything but a king. The art of reigning was the only art of which he was ignorant." We need not stop to consider the political part of this judgment. Certain it is that Charles was a connoisseur born. As soon as he came to the throne he collected together the crown pictures and commenced to add to them. He sent commissioners to France and Italy to purchase pictures, and received many as presents from his courtiers. When his queen's second daughter was born, one, Whitlocke, says the Dutch sent as presents "a large piece of ambergrease, two fair china basons almost transparent, a curious clock, and four rare pieces of Tintoret's and Titian's painting. Some supposed that they did it to ingratiate the more with our king, in regard his fleet was so powerfull at sea." Whatever the reason, they knew what Charles had most at heart. So fond was he of his pictures, so anxious for their protection, that when two "Masks" were represented at Whitehall in 1637, he had a special temporary guardroom built to obviate the risk of fire.

His keeper of the cabinet was Abraham Vanderdort, who compiled the catalogue of the pictures. This poor man had a tragic end. The king had told him to take particular care of a certain miniature which he had newly purchased. Vanderdort put it away so carefully that when the king asked to see it he was unable to recollect its place of safe keeping, and actually hanged himself in despair. After his death the miniature was discovered safely laid aside.

The celebrated cartoons of Raphael were purchased by Charles from Flanders for the manufactory of tapestry established at Mortlake; but his chief glory is that he was the patron of Rubens and Vandyke.

Rubens it was who told the king where the cartoons of Raphael were to be found. That great painter decorated for Charles the ceiling of the Banqueting House at Whitehall, and was knighted by him there in 1630. Rubens's great pupil, Vandyke, on his first visit to England was disappointed in his hope of an introduction to the king. But as soon as Charles learnt "what a treasure had been within his reach," he bade Sir Kenelm Digby, who had sat to Vandyke, invite the painter over to England again. Vandyke was lodged at Blackfriars, whither the king and his court would go by barge upon the river to sit to him, or watch the progress of his paintings.

Looking at his three portrait heads of Charles on one canvas, Bernini, who modelled from them a bust of the king, said that there was "something unfortunate in Charles's face." This prophetic utterance was too soon proved true. It is a melancholy story to trace the dispersal of Charles's noble collection after his unhappy end. Many pictures and much jewellery fell into low hands, but as soon as Cromwell obtained sole power he stopped their further sale. Some of the best had been bought by the King of Spain. These arrived while the ambassadors of Charles II. were at that court. For fear

their feelings should be hurt at the sight of the pictures, the King of Spain gave orders that they should retire for a time. They did so, under the false impression that their dismissal was due to news of another victory of Cromwell having lately arrived.

When the king came by his own again, so many of the crown pictures were collected together, that when good Samuel Pepys, a true lover of art, saw Charles II.'s collection, he admits himself "properly confounded."

The son was but an unworthy successor to the father. He had no inborn love of art. He imitated Louis XIV. without having his example's taste. The amount of his sympathy and tact in the treatment of painters may be gauged by the fact that to save sittings he compelled Lely and Kneller to paint him at one and the same time. This was the commencement of Kneller's fortune. Though Lely, as the painter of repute, chose the best light and pose, Kneller had completed his portrait when Lely seemed to have only begun. Charles had a certain frankness which must have been intimidating to a shy painter. Sitting to Riley, a painter of merit obscured by the greater publicity of Kneller, the painter in his time of no less than ten kings, Charles asked the bashful artist, "Is this like me? Then, od's fish, I am an ugly fellow!" To Charles's credit we must put it down that he encouraged Vandevelde. It was, however, his love for sailing more than his love for art which accounted for this. Pepys

makes mention of his nautical proclivities. The writer is acquainted with a small picture of Vandevelde, which represents two yachts preparing for a sailing match. On one of them is a figure which is probably the king, to judge from the respectful attitudes of the surrounding figures. The picture might well represent that occasion upon which a certain "little Dutch bezan" sailed clean away from the English crack, as Pepys relates.

Our succeeding kings may be passed over without much delay. James II. reigned but four years. Of William III., Walpole says this prince, like most of those in our annals, contributed nothing to the advancement of arts. . . . He courted Fame, but none of her ministers." Kneller's career lasted through William's and Anne's reigns. He lived to draw the portrait of George I. A mercantile painter was he, and chose the branch of art that paid. "Painters of history make the dead live," he said, "and do not begin to live till they themselves are dead. I paint the living, and they make me live!" When one day a friend remonstrated with him for letting a badly-painted picture leave his easel, his easy answer was, "Pho! they will never think it was mine!"

There was no connoisseur amongst the first three Georges. On the reign of the first, Walpole says he shall be as brief as possible in his account of "so ungrateful a period." No great name emerges. With George II. our historian becomes more cheerful, but with no great reason.

Architecture he says in that reign "revived in antique purity!" Perhaps so, but it was to the destruction of many a fine old mansion. His other cause for congratulation was the rise of the hitherto unknown art of landscape gardening. This new art soon reached the limits of the absurd, when Kent planted dead trees in Kensington Gardens to imitate the ways of nature.

The field was indeed lying fallow for a time, to blossom soon with the glories of Reynolds and Gainsborough, but these bright native stars drew their clients from all classes of society. By their time the painter has long ceased to be a retainer of the king's household. The intimate relationship between kings and artists of former days exists no more

George IV. laid the foundations of the large collection of bric-a-brac which belongs to the crown. He collected Sèvres china, Louis XV. and XVI. furniture, ormolu, bronzes, mounted oriental porcelain, and snuff-boxes from France. Of English works of art his fancy was for old plate, miniatures, and Chelsea china. His agent was a French cook, who established relations with the *emigrés* in England and their friends abroad. This man often went to France, and shipped his acquisitions, by way of St. Malo, on board of a British frigate conveniently stationed at Guernsey.

CHAPTER IX.

A CONNOISSEUR OF LATER DAYS.

Most people care to know little more about Beckford than the two facts that he built Fonthill and was the author of "The History of the Caliph Vathek." Few remember that he made that great collection which in our time is associated with the name of the Duke of Hamilton who married Beckford's daughter. Those who have only become acquainted with him through the pages of "Vathek," would have done better to have read his letters from Spain and Portugal and Italy.

Beckford was, indeed, a typical connoisseur of the days when to be a collector meant usually that a man was instructed and refined. Born in 1759, he lived under the full sway of the classical idea, which permeates his thoughts and their expression. Of the thousands who have made the grand tour of the Continent, he was amongst the few who have been able, in spite of a propensity to talk about "impending" rocks and trees, to make their reminiscences interesting. We shall acquire a very fair idea of the eighteenth century connoisseur's ways of thought if we follow him for a short time on his continental tours.

Italy, of course, is the goal of Beckford's every thought. He has no patience with Holland, and very little with Germany. He has got all the way to Mannheim before he strikes an enthusiastic note. There everything pleases as far as "inanimate objects" are concerned. So early as this he evinces that love for large architectural proportions, which his enormous wealth enabled him to gratify, and which culminated in Fonthill. The galleries of the Electoral Palace, he notices, are nine in number, and "about three hundred and seventy-two feet in length." His enthusiasm for everything he sees, the gardens and fountains where "the dubious poetic light . . . detained me for some time in an alcove reading Spenser," finds a further outlet in music played on "an excellent harpsichord." We find that his love of music wherever he is—he seems to have carried a piano about with him—is not more inveterate than his tendency to have always the appropriate book ready to hand for every emergency. In front of S. Giorgio Maggiore at Venice we discover him conveniently supplied with a suitable Italian poet. "Whilst I remained thus calm and tranquil, I heard the distant buzz and rumour of the town. Fortunately a length of waves rolled between me and its tumults, so that I ate my grapes and read Metastasio undisturbed by officiousness and curiosity. When the sun became too powerful, I entered the nave and approved the genius of Palladio." At Padua he was "too near the last and one of the most celebrated abodes of Petrarch to make the

omission of a visit excusable. . . . I put the poems of Petrarch into my pocket."

In Virgil's country he appropriately quotes at the sight of a large crop of apples those very informing lines:

"Strata jacent passim sua quaeque sub arbore poma."

It is unkind of fate, therefore, to ordain that at Mantua, the very birthplace of the poet, "the beating of drums and sight of German whiskers" shall "scare every classic idea."

Though troubled with a good many of these, Beckford was in truth no dry classical scholar or antiquary. An overnight flirtation with "the fascinating G——a" "on the banks of the Brenta" was quite sufficient to destroy all his interest in the antique baths, at the foot of the Euganean hills, to which his friends escorted him. It is interesting, by the way, to notice that Shelley is not the only Englishman who has found inspiration in these same hills. "After dinner," says Beckford, "when the shadow of domes and palaces began lengthening across the waves, I rowed out . . . to contemplate the distant Euganean hills." If we are to believe the writer, this habit of contemplation was sufficient to tear him away even from trout and cherries. At Mittenwald there is a fine effect of sunlight, "which filled me with such delight and with such a train of romantic associations that I left the table and ran to an open field . . . to gaze in solitude and catch the vision before it dissolved away." Beckford has an ineradicable tendency to give us

all his thoughts and heartbeats in front of a fine view, but this was to be expected of the man whom the elder Pitt pronounced "all air and fire," and warned against the habit of reading the "Arabian Nights."

It is possible, we admit, to weary of his "interior gloom" and of his "transportations in thought." Has he not, however, prepared us for this by the title of his epistles, which is "Dreams, Waking Thoughts, and Incidents"? If the former two are apt to pall, the latter item fully compensates us. We very soon find that he can describe most incisively even that which he affects at times to scorn.

We must remember that Beckford lived before the days of the Gothic revival. Not seldom, however, he is betrayed into an expression of admiration for a triumph of Gothic art. Of the shrine of the Three Kings of Cologne, he says, "Nothing to be sure can be richer than the shrine which contains these precious relics." Then follows an expression of the scepticism characteristic of the eve of the Revolution—a scepticism which contrasts oddly with the enthusiastic and dreamy side of Beckford's nature. "It seems the holy Empress Helena . . . first routed them out; then they were packed off to Rome. King Alaric, having no grace, bundled them down to Milan, where they remained till it pleased God to inspire an ancient archbishop with the fervent wish of depositing them at Cologne. There these skeletons were taken into the most especial consideration, crowned with

jewels and filigreed with gold." He notices what we have observed elsewhere with regard to this shrine, the extraordinary agglomeration of profane gems upon its surface. "I was rather surprised to find it not only enriched with barbaric gold and pearl, but covered with cameos and intaglios of the best antique sculpture. Many an impious emperor and gross Silenus, many a wanton nymph and frantic bacchanal, figure in the same range with the statues of saints and evangelists. How St. Helena could tolerate such a mixed assembly passes my comprehension." The reason, as we show elsewhere, is that these gems were not recognized as pagan at all, but rather as the work of the Israelites in the wilderness; or if they were known to the Empress Helena to be heathen, their attributes were changed by consecration to Christian uses. Later on, at Munich, he notices "St. Peter's thumb enshrined with a degree of elegance, and adorned by some malapert enthusiast with several of the most delicate antique cameos I ever beheld; the subjects, Ledas and sleeping Venuses, are a little too pagan, one should think, for an apostle's finger." At the Grande Chartreuse the fathers as usual came into dessert, "and served up an admirable dish of miracles well seasoned with the devil and prettily garnished with angels and moonbeams." Beckford is never tired of making sport of the "holy crows" of the cathedral of Lisbon, or the Angel Gabriel's wing feather at the Escurial. At the latter place his attitude seems

to have inspired his cicerone, a stern and suspicious Catholic father, with doubts as to whether Beckford was a fit person to view such a precious relic. He seems occasionally to have forgotten that though he despised relics, their guardians frequently regarded them with the deepest veneration. A more recent traveller in Spain was, he told the writer, much amused by the relative degrees of authenticity ascribed to various relics. In a cathedral sacristy a long procession of bones of saints and martyrs was displayed for his edification. At last the good fathers produced their greatest treasure, a piece of the Cross, with these enthusiastic but equivocal words, "And now we are going to show you a relic which is really true!"

The same doubting frame of mind—in spite of Metastasio—is observable in Beckford on the occasion of that visit to S. Giorgio Maggiore which we have before mentioned. There is a sly remark at the end of his description of Paul Veronese's masterpiece, "The Marriage of Cana in Galilee." "I never beheld so gorgeous a group of wedding garments before; there is every variety of fold and plait that can possibly be imagined. The attitudes and countenances are most uniform, and the guests appear a very genteel decent sort of people, well used to the mode of their times and accustomed to miracles."

Beckford's admirations in the sphere of painting are interesting. They serve to mark the evanescence of the reputations of some artists

who were heroes in their day, and the durability of the fame of the giants of art. Amongst dead artists, Poelemburg, whom Bryan's dictionary sums up as a "painter for the boudoir," is one of his minor demigods, and of contemporary painters Zuccarelli is mentioned with enthusiasm. Beckford has another fling at Flemish art in the following apt description: "Whenever a pompous Flemish painter attempts a representation of Troy, and displays in his background those streets of palaces described in the Iliad, Augsburg, or some such city, can easily be traced. Sometimes a corner of Antwerp discovers itself; and generally above a Corinthian portico, rises a Gothic spire." He has little or nothing to say of Rembrandt—whose star, perhaps, had not risen high as yet above the eighteenth-century connoisseur's horizon, although Sir Joshua Reynolds had several examples in his collection when he died in 1792. Raphael, of course, no gentleman of that day had commenced to despise. We are surprised to find so little mention of Velasquez when he visits Madrid, considering the rather misdirected extravagance of his one allusion to him. "My attention was next attracted by that most profoundly pathetic of pictures, Jacob weeping over the bloody garment of his son; the loftiest proof in existence of the extraordinary powers of Velasquez in the noblest work of art." Modern admirers of the great realist would perhaps demur to the nature of this appreciation. Beckford tells us an amusing incident that happened

at a villa which Rubens was said to have inhabited. "True enough, we found a conceited young French artist in the arabesque and Cupid line busily employed in pouncing out the last memorials in this spot of that great painter; reminiscences of favourite pictures he had thrown off in fresco upon what appeared a rich crimson damask ground. Yes, I witnessed this vandalish operation, and saw large flakes of stucco imprinted with the touches of Rubens fall upon the floor, and heard the wretch who was perpetrating the irreparable act sing 'Veillons, mes sœurs, veillons encore,' with a strong Parisian accent all the while he was slashing away." At Aranjuez he notices "a set of twelve small cabinet pictures touched with admirable spirit by Teniers, the subjects taken from the 'Gierusalemme Liberata,' treated as familiarly as if the boozy painter had been still copying his pot-companions. Armida's palace is a little round summer-house; she herself, habited like a burgher's frouw in her holiday garments, holds a Nuremberg-shaped looking-glass up to the broad face of a boorish Rinaldo. The fair Naiads, comfortably fat, and most invitingly smirkish, are naked, to be sure, but a pile of furbelowed garments and farthingales is ostentatiously displayed on the bank of the water; close by a small table covered with a neat white table-cloth, and garnished with silver tankards, cold pie, and salvers of custards and jellies. All these vulgar accessories are finished with scrupulous delicacy." A better summary of the

qualities and defects of Teniers could scarcely have been penned.

Connoisseurs of Beckford's day were strict partisans of a refined style—grand it might be, but refined it must. This worship of style, the natural result of being educated in the Classical, which is the style *par excellence*, peeps out even when the writer describes his own idle dreams or attempts in music or art. Mounted on his high horse, "the chimæras which trotted in my brain . . . I shot swiftly from rock to rock, and built castles in the style of Piranesi upon most of their pinnacles." Nowadays we should follow our own fancies (which might turn out Gothic or Classical in the end), irrespective of the style of any favourite artist. On the Bridge of Sighs, the complaint seizes him very badly. "I could not dine in peace, so strongly was my imagination affected; but, snatching my pencil, I drew chasms and subterranean hollows, the domain of fear and torture, with chains, racks, wheels, and dreadful engines . . . in the style of Piranesi." It is the same with music. A bell begins to toll. "Its sullen sound filled me with sadness. I closed the casements, called for lights, ran to a harpsichord prepared for me, and played somewhat in the style of Jomelli's Miserere." We are impatient with this attitude of conscious imitation. At the present day style is neglected too much, and we lay ourselves open to the chance of a perpetration of horrors with no style at all. There is this to be said, that by giving untrammelled play to his fancy a man of talent

may hit upon something good and original. The slavish imitation of a Beckford can never lead to anything but prettiness of the correctest attitude.

Of sculpture Beckford has many excellent things to say. He rhapsodizes over the "Venus de Medici." The "Milo" was not as yet the glory of the Louvre. A "Morpheus" in white marble gives occasion for an excellent exposition of one of the true principles of sculpture. "When I see an archer in the very act of discharging his bow, a dancer with one foot in the air, or a gladiator extending his fist to all eternity, I grow tired, and ask, 'When will they perform what they are about? When will the bow twang? the foot come to the ground? or the fist meet its adversary?' Such wearisome attitudes I can view with admiration, but never with pleasure. The 'Wrestlers,' for example, in the same apartment, filled me with disgust. I cried out, 'For Heaven's sake, give the throw and have done!'"

As to the "Perseus" of Cellini, he confines his admiration chiefly to the pedestal, "incomparably designed and executed." His masterpiece he finds at the Escurial, in "that revered image of the crucified Saviour formed of the purest ivory, which Cellini seems to have sculptured in moments of devout rapture and inspiration. It is by far his finest work. His 'Perseus' is tame and laboured in comparison."

A special interest attaches to the later letters of Beckford, from the fact that he was one of

the last travellers who have written upon works of art seen during travels made before the outbreak of the French Wars. He had the advantage of viewing the rich treasures of Spain and Portugal *in situ*. The cathedrals and convents still possessed those magnificent pictures, reliquaries, monstrances, and other works of art, which their guardians little guessed were to be carried off before long or melted down by the invader. Beckford's great wealth and influential friends obtained for him the *entrée* to every secluded monastery he had a desire to see. Perhaps the most interesting of all his letters are those which describe the life in the great Portuguese foundations of Alcobaça and Batalha. This journey was made in 1794, in company with the Grand Prior of Aviz and the Prior of St. Vincent's, who were making a semi-official visitation to the monastery of Alcobaça. Beckford's experience was perhaps unique. The revenues of Alcobaça then exceeded £24,000 a year, and the treatment the visitors received was royal. A play written by one of the monks, "The excruciating Tragedy of Donna Inez de Castro," was performed for their sole edification. Beckford was among the last foreigners who saw these magnificent foundations in their glory. Miss Pardoe described Alcobaça after its plundering by the French. The wanton mischief they did may be estimated from this one fact, which we have learnt from an informant before quoted. He visited Alcobaça some forty years ago, when the place was

deserted, and the galleries where Beckford and his jolly companions feasted were untenanted. In the place of worship were many side-chapels, each with large wooden altars and super-altars highly decorated. The French had set fire to every one of these, and the stonework blackened high up showed where the devouring flames had leaped. Our informant was also told by a friend, who was British vice-consul at Lisbon, that he was present when the last monks were expelled from Alcobaça. This gentleman with his duties as vice-consul combined the trade of purveying "bacalao," or salt fish, for the monasteries. He was astonished one day, just before the final suppression, to receive an unprecedented order for fourteen cartloads of his commodity. He asked no questions, but executed the order, learning afterwards that the carts of fish had been used by the prior for the purpose of carrying to Lisbon without raising suspicion —which the use of the monastery's carts would have entailed—the remaining silver plate belonging to the foundation. All this treasure was thus finally dispersed, and much of it was sold in England.

CHAPTER X.

AN INTRIGUING SCULPTOR.

Of the greatest sculptors the stories are well known. Their rivals, men who during their lives not unjustly disputed the palm with these great masters, have fallen on evil days. But their life-histories are perhaps as interesting as those of their more successful companions. We may learn what makes an artist great by studying the defects of lesser lights. Art is a matter of feeling and love, not of mere assiduity and desire for worldly success. If hard work could make a master, then ought Baccio Bandinelli to rank higher in the roll of sculptors. But hard work, even combined with backbiting and intrigue, will not serve to win undying fame. By as much as a man is unfaithful, consciously or the reverse, to the pure love of art, in so much will he be ultimately rewarded. Thus Baccio Bandinelli, whose "Hercules and Cacus" was placed as a rival alongside of Michel Angelo's "David," is now almost less than a name to most of us.

This chapter points a moral upon which Vasari, who knew the sculptor, contrary to his usual practice at the commencement of each of

his biographies, does not dwell. For our own purposes we have supplied the omission. We now proceed to tell how Baccio Bandinelli was the son of a clever goldsmith devoted to the interests of the Medici. As a little boy Baccio showed great energy and talent, if not genius. One winter's day he took into his head to make a recumbent snow giant, a "Marforio," of colossal size. This work, says Vasari, caused great astonishment to the painter who was teaching him, "not so much for the actual merits of the figure, as for the spirit with which the little creature, quite a child, had undertaken the work." Sculpture was evidently more to his taste than painting. He would model the half-clothed figures of the labourers working in the hot summer weather at his father's villa of Pinzirimonte, and the panting cattle on his farm. Leonardo da Vinci encouraged him, and his father built a studio expressly for him, which he stocked with marble from Carrara. Baccio was a hard worker, and if his character had been in harmony with his chosen profession he might have made a more honoured name. He distanced his fellow-students in his copy of the celebrated cartoon of the soldiers surprised while bathing, called "The Battle of Pisa," which Michel Angelo made for Piero Soderini, and showed a greater knowledge of anatomy than the rest. It would seem that in hard work, and a certain talent which did not amount to genius, lay the secret of this first success. Vasari accuses Baccio of having no

scruples in taking unfair advantage of his companions. He is said to have counterfeited the key of the Hall of the Grand Council, where the cartoon was displayed, so as to be able to enter in and go out at all times unhindered. In 1512 Soderini was deposed on the restoration of the Medici. During the disorders the cartoon was torn to pieces. Vasari, in his second edition, 1568, accuses Baccio, who was then twenty-five years old, of having done this, though in the first, published 1550, he had said that it was the result of the carelessness of the artists who copied it. Symonds attributes this second version to the spite Vasari had against Bandinelli, and which he did not scruple to show after Bandinelli died in 1559. In support of this view he points out that Cellini, who hated Bandinelli with a more bitter hatred than that of Vasari, does not attribute the destruction of the cartoon to Bandinelli. This he certainly would have done if he had felt there was the least possible justification. However this may be, some humorist said that Bandinelli tore up the cartoon for the sake of studying it in detail. Other detractors accused him of a wish to deprive the other students of their beloved model. Vasari copiously gives two more reasons: one, his affection for the reputation of Leonardo da Vinci, which had been sensibly diminished by Michel Angelo's triumph; the other, Bandinelli's private hatred of Michel Angelo. One thing is certain, that of all the artists in Florence, Bandinelli was the best

hated, and likely to be the scapegoat of all iniquities.

He had a fixed idea that artistic success might be won by labour, that a man can do whatever he wishes strongly enough to accomplish. To gain his ends he did not suffer scruples of conscience to interfere. His crooked nature seems to have prompted him to deal insincerely by his best friends. Believing that he might learn to paint as well as he could draw, and wishing to gain an insight into the process, he begged Andrea del Sarto to paint his portrait. He purposed to watch the painter's method during the sittings, and to keep the portrait as a guide for himself. After a little practice he intended to blossom out as a self-taught painter. Poor Andrea, who was the dupe of a beautiful but heartless wife, was alert enough in matters of painting. He resented Baccio's underhand methods, and, though he did not refuse, he defeated his object. Andrea painted the portrait, but so swiftly and with so many colours that Baccio learnt nothing, except to admire the dexterity of the master. His next attempt was more open. He applied directly to Il Rosso, who gave him, with that freemasonry which characterizes most artists when properly approached, all the information he required. But nothing could make Baccio a painter of merit. He had neither an eye for colour nor a sympathetic hand. He drew with more correctness than feeling, and his style was consequently always hard and uninteresting. Those

who are familiar with the plates that were engraved from his cartoons of the "Slaughter of the Innocents" and his "Martyrdom of St. Lawrence," cannot but feel that Michel Angelo was right when he said that painting was no trade for Baccio Bandinelli. They are most stagey and jejune performances, conspicuous more for the exaggeration of all the muscles than for any artistic charm. They do not augur well for his success in coping with the additional difficulties of brushwork and colour. He attempted fresco also with poor success. The plaster, he found, dried too quickly for his execution to keep pace with the exigencies of the material. When the truth dawned upon him he remedied the situation characteristically, by hiring a young man named Agnolo, brother of Francia Bigio, "who handled the colours very creditably," to do all his painting for him. Henceforth he confined himself to sculpture and to designing cartoons for others to paint. Returning to his anatomical studies, he spent years on their dry details. He made the mistake, in fact, of thinking that artistic success was to be won through the minuteness of his study of the bones and muscles. "Impelled," says Vasari, "by a firm will, with which it was manifest that he had been endowed by nature from his earliest youth even more largely than with aptitude or readiness for art, he spared no labour . . . hoping by incessant practice to surpass all who had previously pursued his vocation, as he firmly believed he should do."

The Medici, partly for his father's sake, were his good patrons. In 1515 Leo X. allowed him to commence a colossal "Hercules," which Baccio confidently promised should eclipse Michel Angelo's "David," close to which it was to be erected. Now Michel Angelo had himself proposed, while Leo X. was alive, to employ a certain block of marble at Carrara for a statue of "Hercules and Cacus," to be placed near to his "David." When Clement VII. became pope, Domenico Boninsegni, superintendent of the quarries, had the effrontery to propose to Michel Angelo that they should unite to make a secret profit out of the marbles. This Michel Angelo excused himself from doing, not wishing to degrade himself and his art by defrauding his patron. As a natural consequence the superintendent became his bitter enemy, and persuaded the pope to hand over the great block of marble to Bandinelli, who thus stole from the master both his subject and his material. In vain were the remonstrances of Michel Angelo. The pope was pleased with the model of Baccio's "Hercules," "and thus," says Vasari, "the city was deprived of a fine ornament which that marble treated by the hand of Michel Angelo would indubitably have become." Symonds describes Baccio's statue as "the misbegotten group which still deforms the Florentine Piazza."

But trouble was in store for the usurper. During its transport from Carrara, when about eight miles from Florence, the block was acci-

dentally let drop into the mud of the Arno, and was only recovered with difficulty. Many were the jokes, both in Italian and Latin verse, upon the subject at Bandinelli's expense. So unpopular was he from his boasting, evil-speaking, and hatred of Michel Angelo, that one writer declared that the stone, finding it was destined to be blundered over and botched by Bandinelli, had plunged into the river in despair! Not till 1534 did Baccio complete the "Hercules." Though he sharpened up the contours of all the muscles on finding that the modelling lacked force in the open air, the statue was received with a chorus of satire. So ingeniously acute were many of these that Duke Alessandro at last became displeased at the indignities thus offered to a public work, and finally put some of the scoffers in prison. The close neighbourhood of Michel Angelo's "David" destroyed the effect of Baccio's "Hercules," but Vasari, who disliked the sculptor as a man, ungrudgingly gives him all the praise his work deserves, pointing out, as he does, that though it might compare ill with Michel Angelo's, it was better than similar colossal works of other sculptors. The moderate success of the "Hercules" is typified by that juvenile production of the snow giant. It was a production huge in size, but cold and uninspired by the spark of genius, and it resulted in a "frost."

His comparative failure embittered the hatred with which Baccio pursued Michel Angelo. Some time afterwards he had the effrontery to persuade Cosimo de' Medici to allow him to take

from Michel Angelo certain marbles which the latter had received from the duke. On many of these the great master had commenced work. One, indeed, was a statue in a forward state. But the ruthless Baccio had no pity. He did not refrain from inflicting upon Michel Angelo the most grievous wrong which one artist can do to another, the wanton destruction of his handiwork. We can have but small sympathy for Bandinelli, even if he was hurt by Michel Angelo's perfectly just condemnation of his painting, while he praised his draughtsmanship. To say the truth, Baccio was more than half a tradesman. Instead of confining himself to sculpture, in which he had facility, if not grace, he was ready to do anything which would bring in money. It was a constant habit with him to draw large sums for work which he neglected and perhaps never intended to finish. At the same time, he was never behindhand in pushing his interests. The methods he employed to ingratiate himself with Cosimo de' Medici were as effective as their results were baneful to others. A present of a "Deposition from the Cross" to Charles V. secured him the honour of knighthood and a commandery of St. James, in which he took no small pride.

Do what he would, however, Baccio was continually in trouble. The contempt with which his "Hercules" was received, and the difficulties thrown in his way, were largely owing to the fact that he could not restrain himself from mischief-making. While completing his great

statue he had apartments in the Medici Palace. To create the impression of an extraordinary fondness on his part for his patron the pope, he wrote him every week a letter in which he acted as a spy upon the administration of the government of Florence, to the detriment of the citizens. Later on he nearly fell a victim to the suspicions which his conduct aroused. He was continually dancing attendance upon Cardinal Salviati, in the hope of obtaining the commission for the tombs of Leo X. and Clement VII. The cardinal was at that time intriguing against Duke Alessandro. Baccio's constant dogging of Cardinal Salviati inspired a belief that he was acting as a spy upon his movements, and had not the business of the monuments been, fortunately for him, soon concluded, the younger amongst the cardinal's supporters had determined to put him out of the way by assassination.

These tombs were the cause of a great mortification to Bandinelli. One evening Cardinal Salviati and others were dining together for the purpose of deciding upon the design of the monuments. Presently there entered Solosmeo, a sculptor and friend of Cellini, who was quite as free-spoken as Bandinelli, for whom he had an antipathy. Cardinal Ridolfi said to the latter, "We should like to hear what Solosmeo will say about the contract, so, Baccio, hide you behind the curtain." Asked his opinion, Solosmeo, who was somewhat inebriated, immediately began to abuse the cardinals for their bad

choice and revile Bandinelli. The latter rushed forth in a rage ; when Solosmeo, turning to the cardinals, said, "What kind of tricks are these, my lords ? I will have nothing more to do with priests," adding to Baccio as he went off amidst the shouts of laughter of the cardinals, "You know now what other men think of your art. You have only to prove them in the wrong by your next work."

Events justified the opinion of Solosmeo. Bandinelli was more anxious to receive the money than to produce a masterpiece. Though he extorted the whole sum he neglected the principal figures, which were eventually completed by others. Compelled to refund, he did not scruple to sculpture the portrait of Baldassare da Pescia, who was the cause of this, upon a bas-relief with a live pig upon his shoulders.

Yet Baccio seems to have been smooth-tongued enough when he had a purpose to serve. We have seen that he persuaded Cosimo de' Medici to allow him to rob Michel Angelo of his marbles and sketches. He now proceeded to perpetrate, in partnership with Giuliano di Baccio d'Agnolo, his greatest and most scandalous imposition. The two persuaded the infatuated duke to give them the enormous commission to decorate the Palazzo Vecchio with the most elaborated architectural additions and reliefs. The conspirators were aware that if they disclosed the whole of their designs at once the duke would be staggered by the expense. They spoke first therefore only of

the decorations of the Audience Chamber and the exterior façade with its various statues. The duke agreed, and paid Baccio a weekly stipend on his own terms. But neither of the two intriguers were architects. Baccio openly affected to despise architecture. The result was that, although they were working on the Hall, which was out of square for several years, the niches of the exterior façade betrayed the irregularity, and the work was only half completed. The entire scheme was rearranged and ultimately finished by Vasari. Moreover, of the few statues which Bandinelli did complete, that on which he spent most labour, the portrait of Cosimo, the duke and his whole court denied to be in the least like his excellency.

Finding that everyone blamed his statue, Baccio angrily knocked off the head, intending to make another and join it to the torso; but this, too, he never accomplished.

The practice of joining marbles was a favourite one with Bandinelli, but was universally condemned by sculptors.

Knowing that he should never complete the commission, and having offended all his assistants by his overbearing ways, Baccio began to make new projects and to persuade the duke to allow him to complete the octagonal choir of Santa Maria del Fiore. This, too, was an ill-advised and over-elaborate scheme.

Bandinelli spent his greatest efforts upon two figures of Adam and Eve. His first Adam turning out "too narrow in the flanks and some-

what defective in other parts," he adroitly turned him into a Bacchus. A new Adam necessitated a new Eve, the old one being developed into a Ceres. When the new "Adam and Eve" were exhibited to the public, they suffered the same fate as the "Hercules and Cacus," being cruelly pelted with derisive sonnets. Vasari, generally just to those who loved him not, finds nevertheless much to praise in them. A "gentlewoman" asked to give her opinion, discreetly remarked that as to the Adam she was not competent to judge, but that the statue of Eve seemed to have two good points, its whiteness and firmness. It was fortunate for the artist that he was fairly thick-skinned. He concerned himself less with the strictures of his critics than with the pursuit of wealth, and amassed several fine estates in the country besides his house in Florence. He had become in fact an inveterate money-grubber, and henceforth cared little for work. No complaints of the unfinished state of the Hall of Audience or other works affected him in the least, though his jealousy of the success of others continued as strong as ever. Meanwhile he had fallen into disfavour with Duke Cosimo, who was tired at last of seeing so many ambitious commencements never brought to a conclusion. But Baccio, who, as Vasari says, had contrived to render himself so acceptable to the duke, and frightened everyone by his haughty demeanour, was at last to meet his match. Nemesis came upon him in the form of Benvenuto Cellini. Bandinelli was

consumed with jealousy at the idea that Cellini should be commissioned by the duke to make his famous "Perseus." Henceforward there were never-ending recriminations between the two, which, while the contest was confined to words in his presence, afforded the duke fresh amusement. One day Cellini the fire-eater fixed his fierce eye upon his rival, and with a menacing gesture said, "Prepare yourself, Baccio, for another world, for I intend myself to be the means of sending you out of this." Not a whit behindhand — in words at least — "Let me know beforehand," Baccio retorted, "that I may confess and make my will, since I don't wish to die like a brute-beast, as you are." The duke interfered, and the quarrel was hushed for the time. It burst out with greater vehemence than ever when Cellini and Ammanato contested with Bandinelli for a large block of marble. By favour of the duchess, who was always —thanks to one or two little presents of statues —the friend of Baccio, and Cellini's bitter enemy, in spite of his gifts of silver plate, the marble was adjudged to the former. His behaviour was characteristic of his jealous nature. Too lazy by this time to produce a large statue himself, he had the marble so frittered and reduced at Carrara as to make it impossible for himself or anyone else to make an important work. This and other aggravations so vexed the artistic soul of Cellini that, says he, "I resolved to kill the scoundrel wherever I could catch him, and set off for the purpose of seek-

ing him." He met Baccio coming through the Piazza di San Domenico, but seeing that he was "unarmed and on a wretched mule no bigger than a mouse, pale as death, too, and trembling from head to foot," he spared his life, contenting himself with saying, "You need not shake so violently, you pitiful coward; you are not worth the whacks I had intended to give you." At this Baccio looked somewhat reassured, but was unable to find the appropriate retort. The fact was that he had met more than his match in the man, who, as Vasari says, was "of a bold, proud, animated, prompt and forceful character; a man but too well disposed and able to hold his own by word in the presence of princes." Of the abuse Cellini served out to Bandinelli "in the presence of princes," the following is a specimen of his method of conducting an argument over certain antique statues: "Your excellency does not need to be told that Baccio Bandinelli is himself a compound of all evil: so that whatever he looks at with his viper's eyes instantly becomes bad." "While I spoke," adds Cellini, "Bandinelli was making the most hideous contortions, and exhibited the most detestable visage in the world, for he was indeed so extremely ugly that nothing human could well look more repulsive." We are disposed to agree with Cellini, for we have before us as we write the profile portrait in marble relief of himself which Bandinelli sculptured over the door of his house in Florence. It represents a long-headed man, unpleasantly underhung, and with a harsh ex-

pression. Such a countenance might well belong to one so entirely devoid of nerves or sympathetic feelings as to illtreat his only son, who was himself a most promising artist. Upon the side of the panel is inscribed, "Bacius Bandinellius, Eques Romanus," and beneath the head is the motto, "Candor Illæsus," which he borrowed from his long-suffering patron, Cosimo de' Medici.

He thoroughly deserves the opprobrious terms in which, while doing full justice to his capacity, Vasari sums up a detestable character.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TROUBLES OF AN ARCHITECT.

A PERFECT foil to the character and life of Bandinelli is to be found in the story of Brunelleschi, the famous architect. No intriguer was he who prompted his patrons to waste their money on huge commissions which he never intended to complete. Filippo Brunelleschi executed many works, but his masterpiece, towards the completion of which he trained himself for years beforehand, was the Duomo at Florence. When he was appointed architect, the commission was not obtained, as often with Bandinelli, by favour of a clique, but won as the reward of acknowledged and conspicuous competence. Brunelleschi was a man of a versatile nature. After succeeding in many branches of art, he subordinated all to architecture. Bandinelli had been compelled to relinquish his efforts in other lines, and to fall back upon his original practice of sculpture. Bandinelli detracted from the merits of all his rivals. Brunelleschi, with his friend, the wonderful sculptor Donatello, was conspicuous for unselfishly recognizing the talents of others. Bandinelli had not scrupled to destroy the works of Michel Angelo. Brunel-

leschi and Donatello were no small factors in the great success of Ghiberti. If Bandinelli's praiseworthy works were laughed at, it was due to an unpopularity for which he had only himself to thank. Brunelleschi suffered long annoyances, but he could boast that he had deserved better at the hands of the man for whom he had done so much.

We gather from Vasari's preface that Brunelleschi was, like Socrates, a little man of insignificant appearance. "So much force of mind and so much goodness of heart are frequently born with men of the most unpromising exterior, that if these be conjoined with nobility of soul, nothing short of the most important and valuable results can be looked for from them, since they labour to embellish the unsightly form by the beauty and brightness of the spirit. This was clearly exemplified in Filippo di Ser Brunellesco, who was diminutive in person, but of such exalted genius withal, that we may truly declare him to have been given us by heaven for the purpose of imparting a new spirit to architecture, and to leave to the world the most noble, vast, and beautiful edifice that had ever been constructed in modern times. He was, moreover, adorned by the most excellent qualities, among which was that of kindliness, insomuch that there never was a man of more benign and amicable disposition. In judgment he was calm and dispassionate, and laid aside all thought of his own interest, and even that of his friends, whenever he perceived the merits and talents of others to

demand that he should do so. Never did he spend his moments vainly, but although constantly occupied in his own works, in assisting those of others, or administering to their necessities, he had yet always time to bestow on his friends, for whom his aid was ever ready."

Thus far Vasari, in a strain of eulogy which Brunelleschi's life goes far to justify. Born in 1377, he soon displayed great practical intelligence, though, boy-like, he was averse to learning his letters, "but rather seemed," as his biographer quaintly remarks, "to direct his thoughts to matters of more obvious utility." As, however, his father, who was a notary, saw that the boy's mind was continually bent upon matters of mechanics and art, he put up with his disappointment that Filippo was not to follow his own profession. He wisely compelled him to learn writing and arithmetic. and then placed him in the guild of the goldsmiths as apprentice to a friend. He soon became an extremely expert jeweller in stone-setting, "niello" work, and, as might have been guessed from the other practical side of his mind, in watch-making also. Very soon the limits of the goldsmith's craft became too small for him. He began to execute bas-reliefs, and his ambition to be a sculptor brought him in contact with Donatello, then a youth of the very highest promise. Attracted by each other's talents they became bosom friends. Filippo, more versatile than the sculptor, was very soon considered an excellent architect. He advanced the study of perspec-

tive, which was then imperfectly understood, and the too persistent study of which, Vasari says elsewhere, leads, as we can well believe, to melancholia. He turned everything he studied to a practical use. The celebrated Masaccio was taught perspective by him, and did him credit in his pictures, while the makers of "tarsia," or inlaid furniture work, which often included landscape in wood, were improved in their art by studying under him the same accomplishment. That Filippo was a genius there is no doubt. He could quote scripture so well, owing to his prodigious memory, that the illustrious Paolo Toscanelli, the friend and counsellor of Columbus, called him a second St. Paul.

Donatello was the friend to whom he unbosomed himself, and though they had their little quarrels, these were, as might have been expected from two such dispositions, but of short duration. The only recorded one happened, appropriately enough for a "second St. Paul," over a crucifix. Donatello had completed one in wood for the church of Santa Croce, upon which, thinking that he had this time surpassed himself, he cheerfully asked Filippo his opinion. Now the criticism of an artist, unless he tells the truth as it appears to him, is perfectly valueless. When, however, a man is in love for the moment with his own work, he sometimes receives a rude awakening. This was what happened to poor Donatello. "Why, my dear fellow," was the dictum of his

candid friend, "you have put a rustic upon the cross!" Thereupon Donatello, more hurt than he was perhaps willing to admit, said, "Well, I should like to see you make one yourself—take some wood and try." The expression, "Piglia del legno e fanne uno tu," became a proverbial one to use towards anyone who disparages a thing upon which the maker prides himself. Fileppo's censure was probably just. Donatello had a certain phase of uncompromising realism, as may easily be observed by anyone who looks at the cast of his "St. John Baptist preaching" to be seen at the South Kensington Museum. Filippo, however, felt himself bound to show that his practice was equal to his precept and his critical powers. After working in secret for months he one morning came to invite Donatello to dine with him. The two were proceeding towards Filippo's house, when he stopped in the market to buy some provisions, saying, "You go on; I will be with you in a moment." Donatello entered the house, and immediately saw the crucifix which he had challenged Filippo to make. He found it so beautifully finished and so far surpassing his own that he let fall his apronful of eggs and cheese, and the entire load lay smashed upon the floor. Presently up came Filippo, saying, "What are you going to have for dinner, Donato? You have smashed everything up." "Don't talk to me of dinner," said Donatello, "I've had enough dinner to-day. Your Christ is a miracle!"

The friends were both recognized as excellent

masters, and executed more than one commission together after this. In 1401 it was determined to reconstruct the two doors of the church and baptistery of San Giovanni. All the best sculptors in Tuscany competed. Donatello's design was well conceived, but not so well executed. Filippo's was also good, but Lorenzo Ghiberti's was the best. All were exhibited together, when Filippo and Donatello came to the disinterested conclusion that Ghiberti was the man to make the doors. So they persuaded the syndics by their excellent reasons assigned to give him the work. "Now this was, in truth," says Vasari, "the sincere rectitude of friendship: it was talent without envy and uprightness of judgment in a decision respecting themselves by which these artists were more highly honoured than they could have been by conducting the work to the utmost summit of perfection." "How unhappy," adds Vasari, referring no doubt to Bandinelli and those like him, "how unhappy, on the contrary, are the artists of our day, who labour to injure each other; yet still unsatisfied, they burst with envy while seeking to wound others."

The disinterested conduct of Filippo is enhanced by the fact that he might have shared the commission with Ghiberti. He refused, and we shall see what return the successful competitor made him in after days.

Having failed in this competition, the two friends, Filippo and Donatello, determined to study for some years in Rome. On their arrival,

Filippo was amazed at the beauty of the architecture of the eternal city. His vocation in life was settled. There now became fixed in his heart the ambition to excel as an architect, and to discover a method for constructing the cupola or Duomo of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence. Since the death of Arnolfo Lapi no one had been found bold enough to make the attempt.

He kept his great purpose to himself, not confiding it, for fear of ridicule perhaps, even to Donatello. The two measured and drew every antique building and fragment they could find in Rome and the Campagna for miles around. They were so continually excavating fallen capitals, columns, and cornices, that they began to be called the "treasure-seekers." People believed that the two negligently-attired young men were studying geomancy for the discovery of gold, because they did one day unearth a vase full of copper coins.

Filippo supplied his needs by working as a jeweller. Donatello at length returned to Florence, but Filippo remained noting everything that could possibly be of use—forms of arches, methods of clamping and construction, down to such details as the way in which a hole was made in each stone to insert the iron fastening by means of which it had been drawn up by the pulley into its destined position. In 1407, his health necessitating a change of air, he returned to Florence. Perhaps he had received information of the meeting to be held for the purpose of considering the means of raising the cupola

of Santa Maria del Fiore. At any rate, Filippo was amongst the architects and engineers who gave their opinions, and provisional models were constructed according to the views of Brunelleschi. He spent the succeeding months in secretly preparing models and machines to further his great object. He also amused himself by helping Ghiberti in finishing his famous doors. One morning, however, hearing that there was talk of providing engineers for the construction of the cupola, he took it into his head to return to Rome. His practical knowledge of his fellow-citizens had persuaded him that, on the principle that familiarity breeds contempt, a residence at Rome would enhance his reputation. His policy was justified. As the years rolled on, and the project was no nearer completion, the syndics remembered that the absent Filippo had alone showed sufficient belief in himself to undertake the task. So the superintendents of the works of Santa Maria wrote at length to Rome to implore Filippo to come back to Florence. Filippo was well pleased to return, but he showed himself not too eager to give the superintendents the benefit of his studies by revealing all his models without adequate return. In the course of his speech he said, "How can I help you in the matter, seeing that the work is not mine? I tell you plainly that if it belonged to me, I should no doubt have the courage and power to find means to erect the cupola without so many difficulties." He proceeded to suggest that they should invite

all the well-known architects of all countries to discuss the matter. He then signified his intention of returning to Rome. Although, in 1417, the superintendents had voted him a sum of money to defray his expenses, he was not to be dissuaded from going away to resume his studies. He was by this time convinced that he could carry out the task, but he wished to be invited to undertake it after competition with all his peers. He had no desire to be awarded the commission through interest, so as to give a handle to envious detractors.

At last, in 1420, thirteen years after the first meeting which Filippo had attended, the competitors were gathered together from the ends of the earth. "A fine thing," says Vasari, "it was to hear the strange and various notions propounded on the matter." Some said that the cupola could not be supported without columns, others that it must be made in light sponge stone to diminish the weight. Oddest of all was the opinion that it should be moulded, so to speak, upon a mound of earth modelled to the correct shape. "Then," said the wiseacres who supported this plan, "if you have sprinkled plenty of small coins in the earth, you will get plenty of people to take the earth away. When it is all removed, then your hollow dome will appear intact!" Filippo alone said that none of these appliances were necessary. As, however, he had apparently formulated no plan of his own, everybody laughed at him for a madman. Then he said that the only way was to make it

with a double vaulting, one inside the other, leaving a space between the two. He also undertook to dispense with any preliminary framework, but gradually to erect the actual structure. The superintendents, who were by this time finely bewildered, seemed to think that Filippo's plan was the wildest of all. The more he excitedly demonstrated the feasibility of his scheme, the madder they thought he was, and at length, after repeated dismissals, they caused our hero to be forcibly removed. Filippo said afterwards that he dared not show his nose out of doors for fear of being shouted after for a fool. The poor architect was at his wit's end. He was a dozen times on the point of leaving Florence in despair. He resolved at last to be patient, knowing from experience that the heads of the city never remained long fixed to one resolution. He was afraid to show them his model, because of the imperfect intelligence of the superintendents in architectural matters, and the jealousy of other artists. He now set himself to convince individuals, superintendents, syndics, and private citizens, in detail. The plan succeeded. The board at last determined to give the work either to him or one of the foreign architects. There was another great discussion, at which, after refusing to exhibit his model, Filippo is said to have settled his opponents, as we are told Columbus did, by asking them to make an egg stand upright. When Filippo showed the architects who had all failed to balance the egg that it could easily

be done when you know how—by tapping it gently so as to flatten one end—they all protested they could have done the same. "So you could make the cupola too," retorted Filippo, "when you have seen my models and designs!"

At length the board resolved to give Filippo the commission if he would furnish full details. He gave them in writing, and the board, like any other mixed assembly, were utterly unable to understand them. Yet, as the other architects had not a word to offer, and Filippo seemed as confident as if he had erected ten cupolas, after retiring to consider their determination they announced that they had awarded Filippo the commission. They were still unable to conceive that he could do without a preliminary framework. Fortunately he was able to point to certain small chapels he had erected on the same system. The cautious board voted him master of the works by a majority of votes, but refused to empower him to carry them to a greater height than twenty-four feet. If the result was successful they said he should certainly be appointed to carry out the rest. This want of confidence was annoying enough, but more mortifying still was the result of a plot inspired by the jealousy of the unsuccessful artists.

They persuaded the board to associate Lorenzo Ghiberti with Filippo. The bitter vexation of the latter, says Vasari, the despair into which he fell, may be inferred from the fact that, in spite of the honour that had been paid

him, he was on the point of leaving Florence once more.

The board excused themselves to Filippo, at first, by pointing out that after all he would be the real inventor and author of the fabric. All the same, they gave Ghiberti a stipend equal to his own. The injustice of this was only equalled by the ingratitude of Ghiberti. Instead of repaying the debt he owed the man who had so generously secured him the construction of the bronze doors of San Giovanni and taught him the art of perspective, he only sought to share without labour in the proceeds of Filippo's genius. But the latter determined not to labour under the incubus of Ghiberti for long. He now made a complete model of the cupola. Ghiberti, hearing of this, was naturally very anxious to see it. When Filippo refused, he made one of his own, for which he drew six times as much money as the other had cost. Ghiberti's only object in making it seems to have been that he might not appear to be drawing his stipend absolutely for nothing.

For seven years this unsatisfactory state of things continued. In 1423, the double walls of the cupola having already risen twenty feet, Brunelleschi casually asked Lorenzo whether he had thought of the works necessary to strengthen the fabric. Ghiberti, quite taken by surprise, replied that, as Brunelleschi was the inventor, he had naturally left that to him! Meanwhile, the builders were waiting for directions how to proceed. One morning Filippo

did not appear at the works. He was said to be ill. The builders appealed to Ghiberti. He referred them to Filippo. "Why, don't you know what his intentions are?" asked the astonished workmen. "Yes," was his reply, "but I would not do anything without him." The builders went again to see Filippo, who was still in bed. "You have got Lorenzo there," he said, "let him begin to do something for once." All work was suspended. The workmen complained that Lorenzo, who was good enough at drawing his salary, was utterly incapable of directing them. Then the superintendents called upon Filippo. "Well, is not Lorenzo on the spot?" he asked. "Why does not he do something?" The superintendents replied, "He will not do anything without you;" to which Filippo very quickly answered, "Ah, but I could do it well enough without him!"

The superintendents took the hint, and began to devise means for getting rid of Lorenzo. Filippo recovered with miraculous rapidity, and was ready with another scheme to assist them. "As your worships have divided the salary, let us also divide the labour." He gave Lorenzo his choice whether he would undertake the scaffoldings or the "chain-work" that was to strengthen the eight sides of the cupola. Lorenzo, equally averse from both undertakings, chose the "chain-work," because he remembered that in the vaulting of San Giovanni di Fiorenza there was some that he might copy. He did an eighth part, which Filippo, though he said

nothing to the superintendents, explained to his friends to be quite unsuitable. Hearing of this, the superintendents called on Filippo to explain to them how it should be done. His designs, as complete in this respect as in every other, convinced them at last that Lorenzo was a stumbling-block as an architect, however noted he might be as a sculptor. To show that they were at last capable of distinguishing true merit, in 1423 they appointed Filippo Brunelleschi chief and superintendent of the whole fabric for life. Such, however, was the influence of Ghiberti's friends, that he continued to draw his salary for three years after that date. His faction continued to annoy Filippo by bringing forward models for details in opposition to those that Filippo had made. But that he was the right man to execute the work was shown by the course he followed when his masons went on strike. He hired ten Lombards in their place, and by dint of attending to their every process himself, saying, "Do this here, and do that there," he taught them so much in a day that this handful of men was able to carry on those huge works for several weeks. When the astonished masons offered to come back to work, Filippo kept them several days in suspense, and finally took them on again at a rather lower price than the handsome wages they had received before. That he was exacting in his demands on the energies of his workmen is probable. Most men of genius are impatient with their assistants, and expect more of him

than the average man can perform. On the other hand, he was ever ready to help them at a moment's notice. He would cut rough models out of turnips on the spot to show them how a stone should be carved, or a piece of iron shaped. He was for ever devising safe and convenient scaffolds, and labour-saving pulleys to lighten their toils. There was nothing for which his forethought had not provided, even to wine and eating-shops in the cupola to save the time of the workmen that was lost in going to and fro from that great height for meals.

The superintendence of this great work was indeed no sinecure. Every mortification which the jealousy of rivals and the meanness of contractors could devise was inflicted on Brunelleschi. Though, about the year 1423, he had been elected a magistrate, and had performed his duties with honour to himself, he later on found himself cast into prison by the pettifogging consuls of the guild of builders, because he had omitted to pay some annual tax to which he was liable. The superintendents of Santa Maria del Fiore were furious when they heard that their architect had been put in prison. They issued a solemn decree commanding that he should be instantly liberated, and that the consuls of the guild should be put in his place—a sentence which was straightway carried out.

When the question of the design of the lantern which was to crown the cupola arose, another pitched battle ensued. It might have

been thought that the man who had designed the dome was the only fit and proper architect for the lantern. Not so thought other artists. We find the barefaced Ghiberti and three others competing against Brunelleschi again. They had the impudence to copy details of his own model, which this time he had unwisely not kept secret. There was even "a lady of the Gaddi family who ventured to place her knowledge in competition with that of Filippo." When his friends told him that he should have kept back his model, as one artist in particular had followed it rather closely in parts, he laughed, and said, "The next one he makes will be mine altogether." Filippo, however, conquered. His was the chosen model, and though he did not live to see the lantern completed, he raised it many feet, and left the minutest directions in his will for its completion.

Here must end the story of the building of the cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore, that wonderful work familiar to all visitors to Florence. So much did Michel Angelo admire it, that he made it his model for the construction of the great dome of St. Peter's at Rome. It remains the greatest among many monuments that attest the perseverance and genius of Filippo Brunelleschi.

CHAPTER XII.

PLINY THE ELDER AND HORACE WALPOLE.

Pliny the Elder, Vasari, and Horace Walpole are three writers whose works are mines of gold to writers upon art. The history and anecdotes of art would have been meagre indeed for want of these industrious writers. A short consideration of their different points of view may not be unamusing.

Pliny was a soldier, a historian, and, above all, an encyclopædist. Vasari was himself an artist, and writes as an expert who has known and lived with those whose works he describes. Horace Walpole, accused by some of wasting his life and opportunities, is the type of a *dilettante*. He has written with taste a most useful work.

As Pliny took all knowledge for his province, it is natural that he should deal with the question of art. He comes to it at last in the thirty-third and succeeding books of his "Natural History," the only one of his voluminous writings which has come down to us. A "Natural History" is not, at first sight, a book to treat of art. His remarks on that subject, indeed, are of the nature of a conscientious

digression. Pliny never knew where to stop. Mineralogy is his real subject for the time being. Unable to limit his researches, he feels bound to describe the various uses to which the metals have been applied. This leads him on to discourse of chasing and statuary in metal, and to give an account of the most celebrated artists in each branch. The heading "marble" commits him to a notice of Pheidias and his peers, just as the item of mineral colours condemns him to a history of painting in all its manifestations. His confessedly utilitarian leanings are exhibited in an amusing way. Discussions of the fine arts are interrupted by digressions upon medicinal remedies, and the beneficence of the materials of painter's colours when taken internally. Sinopis, or red ochre, "used medicinally is of a very soothing nature," and arminium, a blue colour very similar to cæruleum, is calculated to make the hair grow.

It is very unfair to complain, as writers do, that Pliny has filled his books with "a barren inventory, enlivened by very few remarks which can satisfy the curiosity of the artist or the lover of art." Pliny's anecdotes have been quoted without acknowledgment again and again, and the interest of them frequently omitted. The wellworn tale of Apelles finding Protogenes not at home, and tracing a wonderful fine line upon a panel to signify that he had called, is quoted from Pliny. Protogenes drew a still finer line inside the outline of Apelles, and went away

again; whereupon Apelles came back and split the two with one finer still, and Protogenes admitted his defeat. "This panel I am told," says Pliny, "was burnt in the first fire which took place at Cæsar's palace on the Palatine Hill; but in former times I have often stopped to admire it. Upon its vast surface it contained nothing whatever except the three outlines, so remarkably fine as to escape the sight. Among the most elaborate works of numerous artists it had all the appearance of a blank space; and yet by that very fact" (he characteristically adds) "it attracted the notice of everyone, and was held in higher estimation than any other painting there." It would be juster to Pliny if, when his anecdotes are quoted as unsatisfying, the entire passage could be given.

Is he making another quiet hit at the public, or merely recording a fact, when he says that a picture by Parrhasius has been three times struck by lightning, "which tends to augment the admiration which it naturally excites"? We are inclined on the whole to think that these are two instances of unconscious satire against the crowd that gapes at pictures on the part of the industrious encyclopædist.

Although he occasionally makes futile criticisms, Pliny is often very much to the point upon the technique of painting and sculpture. He gives us also a very good idea of the luxury of his own age and the simultaneous decline of its art. In this latter item he is in sharp contrast with Vasari, who rightly speaks with a

fine enthusiasm of his age as a climax of artistic endeavour.

Pliny affects to hold, in accordance perhaps with a literary fashion of the time, a strong brief against luxury. The first man to introduce an expensive novelty is always in disgrace with him. We soon come to a tirade against the malefactor "who committed the worst crime against mankind in putting a ring upon his finger." Unfortunately Pliny has not been able to discover his name, or no doubt he would have held him up to more particular detestation. "Men at the present time wear gold bracelets, and women have chains of gold meandering along their sides, and in the still hours of the night sachets of pearls hang suspended from their necks, so that in their very sleep they retain the consciousness of their rich possessions."

The next malefactor is the man who first stamped a gold coin, but Pliny soon leaves him to fall upon artists in general, who have succeeded in making a silver-gilt object by mere skill of workmanship cost more than one of solid gold. This saving in the precious metal should have commended itself to the "Scourge" of luxury. It seems that Pliny rather gives away his case at this point, and turns himself to rend shams. At any rate, he emphasizes his want of innate appreciation of artistic workmanship. What would he have said to the jewellers of India, whose pride it is to spin the smallest quantity of pure gold into an apparently solid bracelet?

Very soon afterwards he is convicted of a lack of science also, a charge he would have much more bitterly resented. He says that the reflections of silver mirrors are due to the repercussion of the air thrown back upon the eyes. We can forgive him this little scientific romance in consideration of the interesting sidelight he throws upon the fashion of his day in silver plate. "The work of no one maker is long in vogue. At one time that of Furnius, at another that of Clodius or Gratius is all the rage. First it is embossed and then chiselled work that reigns supreme. Nowadays the art is lost. Only the old is valued, and that only when the design is nearly worn away." How very like our present hankering for "Queen Anne!" But the Romans have the advantage of us in quantity. Pompeius Paulinus, a mere provincial, had a campaigning service of silver plate that weighed 12,000 pounds. Shoebuckles, swords, couches, chargers, sideboards, and baths are all of silver, or mounted with that metal. But art is bad in Pliny's day in spite of all. Speaking of Corinthian bronze, "it is difficult to say," he remarks, "whether the workmanship or the material is worse." Such was the value attached to ancient specimens that Antony is said to have proscribed Verres, whom Cicero prosecuted, merely with the object of getting hold of some Corinthian bronzes in his possession.

When he arrives at the subject of sculpture Pliny shows that he is no advocate of the

advancement of women. He remarks that Clelia, who swam the Tiber, was honoured with an equestrian statue, "as if it had not been thought sufficient to have her clad in the toga," *i.e.*, in gentleman's attire. He atones for this instance of misguided conservatism by rightly blaming Nero for having his favourite statue of the infant Alexander gilt. This addition to the value of the statue so detracted from its artistic beauty that the gold was removed. We are compelled to doubt his subsequent story of Aristonidas, who wished to express the fury of Athamas subsiding into repentance. He blended, so Pliny says, copper and iron in order that the blush of shame might be more exactly expressed by the rust of the iron which made its appearance through the shining substance of the copper. This, indeed, is a subtlety which does credit to the ingenuity of Pliny or his informant.

Upon painting Pliny has much to say that is of interest. He complains that in his day pictures are banished in favour of variegated marble, just as at present a rage for oak-panelling is reducing the wall space available for the artist. He bewails the fate of portrait painting, "and yet, at the same time," he adds, "we cover the walls of our galleries with old pictures and prize the portraits of strangers." He has heard, we are interested to note, of the titled amateur. "Titidius Labeo, a person of prætorian rank, who lately died at an advanced age, used to pride himself upon the little pictures

which he executed, but it only caused him to be ridiculed and sneered at." Neither is he altogether unacquainted with the military ignoramus. He has a good anecdote of Mummius, the plunderer of Corinth in 346 B.C. When the spoil was sold, King Attalus paid a large sum for a picture by Aristides of Thebes. Mummius, surprised at the price, "and suspecting that there might be some merit in it of which he himself was unaware," cancelled the bargain. He would have been a fit companion for the envoy of the Teutones, who, when asked what he thought the value of a picture of an old shepherd in rags and leaning on a staff, replied that he would rather not have the original, even at a gift. Public exhibitions of pictures are no novelty. Pliny applauds M. Agrippa for making an oration on the advantage of public picture displays, and tells us how Mancinus secured the consulship by standing near a picture of the siege of Carthage which he was exhibiting, and obliging the spectators with a lecture on its details.

Our author is in his simpler vein when of a picture by Nicias he says, "the thing to be chiefly admired is the resemblance that the youth bears to the old man his father, allowing, of course, for the difference of age." This is worthy of the critic who notes that the statue of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, is remarkable for having no straps to the shoes.

Pliny, however, constantly recovers himself. Very soon afterwards we find him sensibly pointing out that, although the best and most

varied colours are attainable in Rome, and though the picture-buyer himself pays for the brightest and most expensive, "made of the slime of Indian rivers and the corrupt blood of her dragons and elephants," yet, strange to say, in spite of all this, there is no such thing as a picture of high quality produced. Yet, says he, "the ancients could produce a masterpiece with but four pigments. Nowadays size is everything. "One folly" (Pliny would never have dared to say this while Nero was alive) "I must not omit. The Emperor Nero had a portrait of himself painted that was a hundred and twenty feet high."

It is to Pliny that we owe all the well-known tales about Zeuxis and Parrhasius and Apelles. One less familiar story of Zeuxis is that "in a spirit of ostentation he went so far as to parade himself at Olympia with his name embroidered on the check pattern of his garments in letters of gold," an example of sartorial taste which no modern has ever surpassed.

Nothing can be better than Pliny's technical appreciation of Parrhasius as the artist best able to suggest modelling (as Holbein could so well) with the outline, "so as to prove the existence of something more behind it." We are compelled to attribute such remarks as these to the promptings of some genuinely artistic friend, from whom also he must have acquired what follows on his next page. "Timanthes," he says, "is the only artist in whose work there is always something more implied by the pencil

than is expressed, and whose execution, though of the very highest quality, is always surpassed by the inventiveness of his genius." Pliny here thoroughly realizes that ideas and technique are greater far than technique alone, a matter which at the present time we are rather inclined to ignore.

Incidentally we are informed that, owing to the influence of Pamphilus, master of Apelles, all the freeborn children of Greece were taught drawing. Drawing was considered the "first step in the liberal arts."

Apelles particularly prided himself upon knowing when to stop, and not worrying his pictures to death. That artist treated his great patron, Alexander, in a somewhat cavalier fashion. The king was one day in his studio talking a great deal about painting without knowing anything about it. Apelles quietly asked him to quit the subject for fear he should begin to be laughed at by the boys who were mixing the colours. And after this Pliny lets us down with the calm assurance that Apelles, having painted a horse in competition with other artists, had some horses brought to decide which picture was the best. "Accordingly it was only at the sight of the horse painted by Apelles that they began to neigh, which thing our author gravely avers to have always been the case ever since, when the test has been employed!"

After this triumph one feels it is time to leave Pliny. We may note, however, that the customs of his day were singularly like those of

our own. The unskilful picture-cleaner is no new thing. A picture by Aristides of Thebes "has lost its beauty owing to the unskilfulness of the painter to whom M. Junius, the prætor, entrusted the cleaning of it." The artist, too, had the same struggle for life two thousand years ago as he often experiences now. Protogenes of Caunus had a hard task to succeed, when young. He lived for some time upon soaked lupines, "by which means," the encyclopædist naïvely remarks, "he avoided all risk of blunting his perceptions by too delicate a diet." In order to protect a picture from the effects of ill-usage and old age he painted it over four times, so that when an upper coat was worn out there might be an under one to succeed it." We fear that Pliny's friend was playing him a trick the day he gave him this valuable hint. Such passages make it obvious that Pliny's information was gained largely at second hand. His discrimination between good and bad authorities is not of the keenest, and this liability to fall from the sensible into the ludicrous upon a single page is the natural fate of a writer who, however well-intentioned, stands very much outside of his subject.

No more complete contrast to Pliny can be imagined than Horace Walpole. It is impossible to fancy the owner of Strawberry Hill and the author of the letters to Sir Horace Mann groaning over a lost ten minutes like the indefatigable Roman. Though some have accused Walpole of idling away his life, he speaks with

authority upon the history of art, for he was a born connoisseur, which the busier man was not. We are not disposed to quarrel with Walpole for recording trivial details as to which he feels himself bound occasionally to apologize. "The reader must excuse," he says on one occasion, "such brief or trifling articles. This work is but an essay towards the history of our arts: all kinds of notices are inserted to lead to farther discoveries, and if a nobler compendium shall be formed, I willingly resign such minutiæ to oblivion." There was no need to apologize. It is a quaint surprise to learn that Samuel Butler, the author of "Hudibras," figures as a painter on the strength of some pictures "said to be of his drawing," and a pleasant sidelight is thrown upon the domestic life of General Lambert, who is enshrined as a painter of flowers.

Walpole has been too humble. His work, based on the researches of Vertue, to whom he has given immortality, has been edited and enlarged again and again. It contains much more than mere "Anecdotes of Painting." Walpole is the English Vasari, and, though not an artist as Vasari was, he is a better writer, and has a greater discernment of relative merit than the simple and enthusiastic Italian. We are at liberty to demur occasionally, as successive editors do, to his judgments, which are never wholly devoid of truth. Here, for instance, is his opinion upon Vandyke. "Sir Anthony had more delicacy than Rubens, but like him never

reached the grace and dignity of the antique. He seldom even arrived at beauty. His Madonnas are homely; his ladies so little flattered that one is surprised he had so much custom. He has left us to wonder that the famous Countess of Carlisle could be thought so charming; and had not Waller been a better 'painter,' Sacharissa would make little impression now." Many would agree to this, though most would cavil at it. When he deals with the subject of allegory in painting, he surely carries us all with him. "I never could conceive that riddles and abuses are any improvements upon history. Allegoric personages are a poor decomposition of human nature, whence a single quality is separated and erected into a kind of half-deity, and then to be rendered intelligible, is forced to have its name written by the accompaniment of symbols. You must be a natural philosopher before you can decipher the vocation of one of these simplified divinities. Their dog, or their bird, or their goat, or their implement, or the colour of their clothes must all be expounded, before you know who the person is to whom they belong, and for what virtue the hero is to be celebrated, who has all this hieroglyphic cattle around him. How much more genius is there in expressing the passions of the soul in the lineaments of the countenance! Would Messalina's character be more ingeniously drawn in the warmth of her glances, or by ransacking a farmyard for every animal of a congenial constitution?"

These forcible expressions must have helped to reduce the demand for allegorical painting, which is fortunately a thing of the past.

Common sense, indeed, is the essence of Horace Walpole. His opening sentences strike the keynote of his book. "Those who undertake to write the history of an art are fond of carrying its origin back as far as possible. . . . Some men push this further, and venerate the first dawnings of an art more than its productions in a riper age." We cannot help thinking we have met some of these men since the time of Horace Walpole. "Mr. Vertue," he continues, "has taken great pains to prove that painting existed in England before the restoration of it in Italy by Cimabue. . . . That we had gone backwards in the science farther almost than any other country is evident from our coins . . . and so far therefore as badness of drawing approaches to antiquity of ignorance, we may lay in our claim to very ancient possession. As Italy has so long excelled us in the refinements of the art, she may leave us the enjoyment of original imperfection."

It would be quite an error to suppose from this that Walpole thought little of his country's later art. His was not one of those natures which delights in finding everything better elsewhere than at home. He shows his true critical gift more than once at the expense of French art. One Charles De La Fosse, a name little known in England, but of great celebrity in France, is described (by a Frenchman) as "Un

des plus grands coloristes de l'école Française." "He might be so," says Walpole, quietly, "and not very excellent: colouring is the point in which their best masters have failed." He is not quite able to do justice to the great exception to the rule of French colouring, Antoine Watteau. "England," he says, "has very slender pretensions to this original and engaging painter," whom he consequently dismisses in a page and a half. It was perhaps impossible for a man living in Walpole's age to appreciate as we do now the old-world charm of Watteau, who by the mere force of genius gave pictorial greatness to the triviality of his little subjects. We must forgive our author when he says "there is an easy air in his figures and that more familiar species of the graceful which we call genteel." We do not call it genteel now, and we are able to recognize that, though Watteau's ladies are sham shepherdesses, they are without periphrasis actual grace itself.

Walpole is very much the child of an age when fashionable painters were allowed to be familiar on sufferance, but when a "gentleman painter" was a rarity to be duly noted down. Francis Le Piper he describes as a gentleman artist who, "though born to an estate, could not resist his impulse to drawing." Compare with this his notice of Thomas Sadler, who "painted at first in miniature for his amusement, and portraits towards the end of his life, having by unavoidable misfortune been reduced to follow that profession." We may be sure that Walpole's

turn of expression arises not from snobbishness, but simply from the general view then taken of the painter's profession. The artist of that day was a Bohemian for the most part. Sir Joshua was an exception in the company he kept, and came later than the time of which we are speaking. Of Le Piper, the gentleman, Walpole says "most of his performances were produced over a bottle, and took root where they were born."

Nothing, indeed, is more noticeable in the course of these biographies than the frequency of deaths among painters at an early age from the gout, which seems to have carried them off by scores at the age of six-and-forty. Irregular living resulted no doubt largely from irregular education, and prejudiced the painter's status in society.

Walpole's liberality of mind in this respect, and his patriotism, by the way, are pleasingly exhibited in his notice of Isaac Oliver, the miniature painter. "Hitherto we have been obliged to owe to other countries the best performances exhibited here in painting; but in the branch in which Oliver excelled we may challenge any nation to show a greater master—if perhaps we except a few of the smaller works of Holbein. . . . Of the family of Isaac Oliver I find no certain account; nor is it of any importance; he was a genius, and they transmit more honour by blood than they receive."

In certain circles, at any rate, there was plenty of recognition of even very moderate genius. The poets were continually praising the painters

by name in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There was certainly a genuine admiration for the sister art among the literary men. Pope even went so far as to learn drawing from Jervas for a year and a half, and was very proud of having dabbed a few strokes on a landscape by Tillemans while the artist was not looking—which the prudent painter was perhaps careful afterwards not to obliterate. Kneller came in for a great share of praise. "Pope was not the only bard that soothed this painter's vainglory. Dryden repaid him for a present of Shakespeare's picture with a copy of verses full of luxuriant but immortal touches; the most beautiful of Addison's poetic works is addressed to him. . . . Prior complimented Kneller on the Duke of Ormond's picture. Steele wrote a poem to him from Whitton. . . . Can we wonder that a man was vain who had been flattered by Dryden, Addison, Prior, Pope, and Steele?"

There seems to be little of this artistic exchange nowadays. That age was perhaps less critical in matters of painting than the present. There was more belief in the actual existence of genius alive, and less tendency to wait for the verdict of posterity. People with pretensions to judge were less captious and more appreciative. Walpole is perhaps right when he says, "In truth the age demanded nothing correct, nothing complete. Capable of testing the power of Dryden's numbers and the majesty of Kneller's heads, it overlooked doggrel and daubing."

There is a curious quaintness about the

artistic phraseology of the eighteenth century. This man "painted some histories," the other depicted "small conversations." We have absolutely no equivalent now for that useful and concise expression. Of Kneller, Walpole says, "his airs of heads have extreme grace—the hair admirably disposed." A later critic of Vandevelde remarks, "We esteem in this painter the transparency of his colouring, which is warm and vigorous, and the 'truth of his perspective.'" His vessels are "designed with accuracy and grace," and his small figures "touched with spirit." His storms are "gloomy and horrid," his "fresh gales are most pleasingly animated," and "his calms are in the greatest repose."

Curiosity of phrase was equalled by curiosity of practice. One Medina, who died in 1711, was encouraged to go to Scotland by the Earl of Leven, who procured him a subscription of "£500 worth of business." He went, "carrying with him a large number of bodies and postures, to which he painted heads."

But Walpole has a truly modern gift of terse expression on occasions. Of Richardson, the portrait painter and writer upon art, he says, "The good sense of the nation is characterized in his portraits." Fully appreciating Hogarth he reserves that great and original genius to a class by himself, while of Sir Joshua he says that "he ransomed portrait painting from insipidity."

It is a recommendation to Walpole that a painter should also be a man of humour. He

never fails to note the characteristic when he has the chance.

His largeness of view is evinced by his remarks on landscape and upon American art. Whatever enormities he may have committed at Strawberry Hill as a precursor of the Gothic revival, Walpole certainly has a feeling for nature. Modern artists have recognized the picturesqueness of the hop gardens of England, but Walpole has been beforehand with them. "The latter, which I never saw painted, are very picturesque, particularly in the season of gathering. . . . In Kent, such scenes are often backed by sandhills that enliven the green, and the gatherers dispersed among the narrow valleys enliven the picture."

Of America he says, "As our disputes and politics have travelled to America, is it not probable that poetry and painting too will revive amidst these extensive tracts as they increase in opulence and empire, and where the stores of nature are so various, so magnificent, and so new?"

Benjamin West's noble picture of "Wolfe at Quebec" was the inspiration of that new world.

Walpole's estimate of the mass of English taste is to be noticed in his remarks upon Wootton, "a capital master in the branch of his profession by which he was peculiarly qualified to please in this country, by painting horses and dogs." There is a large section of the public of all ages which is ever the same. In Elizabeth's reign lived Cornelius Ketel, upon whom Wal-

pole severely animadverts. "He laid aside his brushes, and painted only with his fingers, beginning with his own portrait. The whim took; he repeated the practice, and they pretend executed those fantastic works with great purity and beauty of handling. . . . As his success increased so did his folly; his fingers appeared too easy tools; he undertook to paint with his feet. . . . That public, who began to think, like Ketel, that the more a painter was a mountebank the greater was his merit, were so good as to applaud even this caprice."

History repeats itself. We seem to remember that a few years back one of the sights in the gallery at Antwerp was a painter who employed his feet in the same manner as Ketel, and with greater excuse.

We cannot leave Horace Walpole without a tribute of gratitude for his excellent "Anecdotes of Painting." Enough has been said to show that he was not the fribble that Macaulay paints him. Devoting himself to the congenial talk of breaking a so-called butterfly on a wheel, that unreliable writer, though admitting that Walpole is not often dull, shows himself utterly incapable of appreciating the interests of a connoisseur. He has misused Walpole the son for the most part as a foil to the more historic reputation of his father, to whom he devotes the greater part of a misnamed essay.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE INDISPENSABLE VASARI.

Lanzi, in the preface of his "History of Painting," sneers at those former writers who have filled their volumes with descriptions of the personal appearance of artists, and narrated so many frivolous anecdotes. Doubtless he has, amongst others, Vasari in his mind. The verdict of the world is for Vasari. It is probable that he has ten readers for every one of Lanzi. We would not dispense even with Vasari's most pointless anecdote about his hero, Michel Angelo. It serves to throw a light, if it does nothing else, upon the estimable character of our simple-minded historian, whose sense of humour may, indeed, have been not quite the equal of his enthusiasm. Who would not regret the absence of his stories about Buffalmaco, his jokes and merry companions? Or of the ingenious Paolo Uccello, who so adroitly performed the task of depicting the four elements. Earth was figured as a mole, water by a fish, fire of course by a salamander—a comparatively common beast in those days, for did not Cellini see one, to his juvenile sorrow, in the fire? But how to signify air, that was the crucial difficulty. The

chameleon was the natural symbol, for, as every schoolboy in Italy of the fifteenth century knew for certain, the chameleon lives entirely upon air. So far so good, but Paolo had never been so fortunate as to catch a chameleon. "So," says Vasari, "he painted a camel, which he has made with wide open mouth swallowing the air with which he fills his belly. And herein was his simplicity certainly very great; taking the mere resemblance of the camel's name as sufficient representation of or allusion to an animal which is like a little dry lizard, while the camel is a great ungainly beast!" If Lanzi gave us stories with comments half so informing, we should think the more of his work.

The last seventy pages of his book are devoted by the good Giorgio to the record of his own life. It was a happy and successful one, as it deserved to be. Success, indeed, brought him some enemies, but they were more than counterbalanced by troops of friends. His justice to both enemies and friends alike is exemplified, together with his other good qualities, in his great work, "The Lives of the Artists."

A member of that fraternity, Vasari was not a great, but a prolific artist. No one was more conscious of his defects than he was himself. "Wherefore as their faults" (those of his pictures and architecture) "may, perchance, be described by some other, it were better that I should myself confess the truth, and accuse them with my own lips of those imperfections whereof none

can be more firmly convinced than myself." He claims credit for a wish to do well and for a true love of art. "And now shall it happen, according to the laws usually prevailing, that having openly confessed my shortcomings, a great part thereof shall be forgiven me." The good man makes the public his father confessor in the reasonable hope of a lenient absolution.

Vasari's artistic life was similar to that of the companions of his craft. The artist went where work was to be done and he could secure the doing of it, hiring himself out to conflicting popes and princes just as the "condottieri" of former days fought indiscriminately on either side wherever they could get the highest wage. Thus, in 1529, he had to leave Florence because the war interfered so much with art. So he crossed from Modena to Bologna, "where, finding that certain triumphal arches decorated with paintings were about to be erected for the coronation of Charles V., "I had an opportunity," he says, "of employing myself, even though but a youth, to my honour as well as profit." Arezzo, his birthplace, Rome, Florence, Naples, and many other places were thus visited by Vasari in the pursuit of his vocation. Happy was the man who so commended himself to some princely patron as to receive perpetual employment. It was eventually Vasari's good fortune to be employed by Duke Cosimo after having in a few years lost Pope Clement, Alessandro, and Ippolito de' Medici, in whom all his best hopes had been placed. "I resolved," he says, after

the death of these patrons, "to follow courts no longer, but to think of art alone, although it would have been easy for me to have fixed myself with the new duke, Signor Cosimo de' Medici." The patronage which he refused to jump at after his disappointments became, as we have seen, eventually his reward. We are unable to follow the life of Vasari in detail. It was one of constant and honourable labour. We can but touch on a few points of interest. It was his early patron, Ippolito, who rewarded him for "the first work that proceeded from my hand, or as it were out of my own forge—about the qualities of which I need not say much, for it was but the work of a youth," with a commission for another larger picture and an entire new suit of clothes! It was the remembrance of this first consideration for his early work which perhaps suggested to Vasari in later life the idea of offering to his pupils and assistants, Cristofano Gherardi and Stefano Veltroni, a similar reward of "a pair of nether hose of a scarlet colour" for whichever of the two should do the most excellent work.

Vasari never forgets a friend, and seldom fails to do justice to those with whom, as with Cellini, he was not on the best of terms. He acknowledges the help he obtained from that arch-intriguer, Baccio Bandinelli. There is, indeed, a pathetic truthfulness about him, though Symonds says he depreciates his own character unjustly when he speaks of himself. He receives a commission to construct a façade in

the manner of a triumphal arch, and other works, on the occasion of the visit of Charles V. to Florence in 1536. "These works," he confesses, "were indeed too great for my strength, but, what was worse, the favour by which I obtained them attracted a host of envious rivals around me, and at their suggestion about twenty men who were assisting me . . . left me on the spur of the moment." Whoever hears nowadays of an artist the victim of a strike? Vasari, however, was equal to the occasion. He worked night and day with his own hand. Painters came from other places to assist him. He completed his work in time, to the satisfaction of Duke Alessandro, while those who had been more earnestly busied in interfering with his affairs than in completing their own had in several cases to exhibit their work unfinished. Vasari had a punctual mind. He takes an ingenuous pride in the rapidity of his execution. "These pictures," he remarks on one occasion, "were without doubt accomplished to the best of mine ability, and at the time they may perchance have pleased me, yet I do not know that they would do so at my present age. But as art is difficult in itself, we must be content to accept from each that whereof he is capable. This, however, I may say, that all my pictures, inventions, and designs of whatever sort have always been executed, I do not say with very great promptitude only, but with more than ordinary facility and without laboured effort."

It was indeed a fatal facility. To this, in his consideration for the impatience of patrons, and out of hatred of the practice common with many artists of drawing large sums in advance for work which they never completed, Vasari unconsciously sacrificed his hopes of lasting fame as an artist. He was successful in painting portraits, but of these, he says, "it would be tedious to enumerate these likenesses, and, to tell the truth, I have avoided painting them whenever I could do so." How often does the ambition of the artist lead him to neglect that less aspiring branch of art in which he might succeed. "It is true that Vasari painted many portraits," says Masselli, "and it is also true that in them he appears greater than himself. This difference proceeds, as I believe, from the fact that while painting a portrait he was compelled to keep the reality before him, and could not avail himself of that facility of hand which he turned to account in his larger compositions." It would be interesting to note the differences between the technical practice of Vasari's time and the present day. To copy the actual details from nature is a rarity with him to be duly recorded. Of a picture at Bologna, he says, "the vestments of the pontiff were copied from the real textures, velvets, damasks, and cloth of gold and silver, with silks and such like." Few would think of dispensing with the actual draperies nowadays. Our system of study is based on the copying of nature. The disciple does not spend all his days in copying the

works of his master. That habit, however, was eminently calculated to produce the necessary capacity for covering large spaces from "chic," as French painters say. The demand for decorative oil and fresco painting, which was best done without retouching, inculcated exactly this method of procedure. Commissions could not have been executed by an artist without assistants skilled in a style of bravura painting which our more careful method of drawing does not encourage. Buchanan, in his "Memoirs of Painting," says that Vasari's pictures "possess much of that 'grande gusto' of the school in which he studied, and of those great men whose works he imitated, and to whom he was cotemporary."

There were results attaching to the use of assistants which, though Vasari was always resolved above all things to please his patrons by finishing his work in time, weighed heavily upon his conscience. He had experience before of a strike. At a later date the whole of his young men were "wanted" by the police, and so were obliged to leave him in the lurch. At a monastery in Naples where he was working, the abbot and some monks had quarrelled with the Black Friars when they met in rival processions. The civil magistrate came to the monastery to arrest the abbot, "but the monks, aided by some fifteen or sixteen young men who were helping me in my stucco works, having made resistance, certain of the sbirri were wounded; this compelled my assistants to take refuge in the night-time, some here, others there, and

I was left almost alone." It was an additional annoyance to be disappointed in the results of his helpers' collaborations. To please Cardinal Farnese he completed the frescos in the Hall of the Chancery in the palace of San Giorgio at Rome by a certain day. "But of a truth, if I laboured hard in making the cartoons . . . I confess to an error in having confided the execution of the same to my young assistants for the sake of having them completed more rapidly and within the time (100 days) when the Hall was required, since it would have been better that I had toiled 100 months, . . . for then I should have at least had the satisfaction of having effected all with my own hand and done my best. But this error caused me to resolve that I would never undertake work of which I could not paint the whole myself, permitting nothing more than the mere sketch to be effected by others after my own designs." A worthy resolve by which we fear the good man was unable strictly to hold. That he was a man of business and a good courtier in the best sense is certain. To combine the trades of good courtier and first-rate painter was perhaps only possible to such geniuses as Rubens and Velasquez. That Vasari, though no great artist, was upright, as well as business-like, we learn from an interesting passage of his early life. The monastic fathers of Camaldoli proposed to give him a commission. "I perceived," he says, "that at the first these venerable fathers seeing me to be so young began to doubt of the matter ; yet taking courage I dis-

coursed to them in such a manner that they resolved to accept my services. . . . I refused to make any fixed agreement as to the price at that time ; considering that if my work pleased the monks, they might pay me what they found right, but if it did not satisfy their expectations, I was ready to keep the picture for myself ; and they finding these conditions upright and favourable to themselves, were content to have the work commenced at once." His uprightness was equalled by his modesty. Of his great picture of Esther and Ahasuerus, he says : " In fine, if I were to believe what I then heard from the people, and what I still hear from all who have seen the work, I might be tempted to imagine I had effected something ; but I know too well how the matter stands, and what I would have accomplished had the hand only been capable of performing what the spirit had conceived."

In the course of his happy life Vasari took part in some curious incidents, although he was fortunately a boy of fifteen, safe at Arezzo, when the fearful sack of Rome took place in 1527. He tells a sinister tale of the first attempt of Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici upon the life of Vasari's patron, Alessandro, whom Lorenzo ultimately assassinated. In the general rejoicings upon the marriage of Alessandro with Margaret of Austria, Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici, called Lorenzino and the " Traitor," composed a drama, the representation of which, with the music, he undertook himself. " As Lorenzo,"

says Vasari, "was then fully occupied with the thought how best he might compass the death of the duke, by whom he was so much beloved and favoured, so he now believed that means for accomplishing his purpose might be found in the preparations for that representation." He commissioned Aristotile da San Gallo, the painter and architect, as overseer of the necessary alterations of the stage of the theatre. Aristotile approved of all the changes except one which left the musicians' gallery above the stage, upon which the duke and his retinue would be seated, supported only by a few insufficient props. Lorenzo's ostensible reason was that the acoustic properties of the stage would thereby be improved. "But Aristotile clearly perceived," says Vasari, "that in this plan there was a danger by which many lives might be destroyed; . . . he could therefore by no means be brought to agree with Lorenzo on that point, and it is certain that the intention of the latter was no other than the destruction of the duke."

"Giorgio Vasari, who, though then but a youth, was in the service of Duke Alessandro . . . chanced to hear the contention between Lorenzo and Aristotile." Throwing himself dexterously between them he heard what each had to say, and perceiving the danger threatened by Lorenzo's plan, suggested another way in which the gallery might be made secure. Lorenzo would nevertheless listen neither to Aristotile nor to Vasari. "He would have nothing done, in short, but what he had from the first desired,

yet he offered no opposition to the opinions given, only such manifest sophistries and cavils that his evil intentions became obvious to everyone." "Wherefore Giorgio (Vasari), well knowing the frightful consequences that might result from Lorenzo's design, and certain that this was no other than a plan for the wilful slaughter of some 300 persons, declared that he would very certainly describe the method to the duke, when his excellency might send to examine the matter and provide against the consequences to be expected. Hearing this, and fearing to be discovered, Lorenzo after many words gave Aristotile permission to follow the plan proposed by Giorgio, which was accordingly done." Thus the unfortunate but not well-deserving duke's life was saved by the outspoken courage of a youth in his employ, but not for long, for he was fated to be "ultimately assassinated bythe abovenamed Lorenzo."

Another curious incident which shows the good terms upon which he stood with his patrons occurred to him later in life, while he was busying himself with his "Theories of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting."

He was going out of the city gate to meet Cardinal Monte, who was passing through on his way to the conclave. No sooner had Vasari bowed and spoken a few words than the cardinal said, "I am going to Rome and shall infallibly be elected pope. Wherefore, if thou hast anything to desire, hasten to follow me as soon as the news shall arrive, without waiting any other

invitation than that I now give thee or seeking any further intelligence." Nor was this a vain prognostic. While he was at Arezzo in that same year there came a messenger with the news that Cardinal Monte was elected as Pope Julius III. Mounting his horse, Vasari hurried back to Florence. Bidden "God speed you" by the duke, he started for Rome to be present at the coronation of the new pontiff. Arrived at Rome, he went immediately to kiss the feet of his holiness, "which, when I had done, his first words were to remind me that the prediction he had uttered had not proved to be untrue."

We must not linger over the details of Vasari's life, or we shall have no space to record how the great "Lives" came to be written. Monsignore Giovio, one of Cardinal Farnese's brilliant literary circle, had expressed his desire to write "a treatise concerning men who had distinguished themselves in the arts of design." "What think you, Giorgio," said the cardinal, "would not this be a noble labour?" Upon his assenting, the cardinal suggested that Vasari should supply Giovio with the particulars and the necessary technical information. So Vasari, though he "felt the work beyond his strength," put together the notes which his interest in the subject had led him to collect since his boyhood, and took them to Giovio. The generous Giovio saw at once that Vasari was a better man to write the lives than himself. Even if he had the courage to undertake the task, the best that he could do he said would be "a little treatise

after the manner of Pliny," a mere handbook in fact. Other friends urged Vasari to the work, and thus Vasari, not by painting, nor even by architecture, though no mean performer in either branch, has earned immortality.

In the course of his biographies he refers frequently to "Our book." This was a portfolio of drawings by the various artists whose lives he narrates, and to which he refers when he passes judgment upon their capacity for drawing. This collection is well known. Many of the drawings have been in the writer's family. They are rendered doubly interesting by the fact that the mounts are often decorated in the most lavish manner with elaborate Renaissance ornament, drawn out of sheer love and perseverance by their owner in his spare time of an evening.

It is impossible to review the "Lives" in brief. We have had occasion to quote much from them already. A special feature of each life is the "saw" with which it begins. Vasari loves to generalize and point his moral by a particular case. "Happy," for instance, "is he who possesses also the advantage of living at the same time with any renowned author from whom, in return for some little portrait or similar expression of artistic courtesy, he obtains the reward of being once mentioned in his writings, thereby securing to himself eternal honour and fame. . . . Great then was the good fortune of Simon Memmi in that he lived at the same time with Messer Francesco Petrarca, and that he

further chanced to meet that love-devoted poet at the court of Avignon."

That Vasari believed that "there is but one art" is to be gathered from the opening sentences of his life of Andrea Orcagna. "We seldom find a man distinguishing himself in one branch of art who cannot readily acquire the knowledge of others. . . . We have a case in point exhibited by the Florentine Orcagna." In sharp contrast, this from the first paragraph on Della Robbia paints the pathos of the artistic fight. "No man ever becomes distinguished in any art whatsoever who does not early begin to acquire the power of supporting heat, cold, hunger, thirst, and other discomforts . . . for it is not by sleeping, but by waking, watching, and labouring continually that proficiency is attained and reputation acquired." Vasari fully and literally carried out this precept in his own life. He was ever a believer that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and also that the emoluments of art are not to be despised.

He has a thorough way with mean patrons. Peruzzi of Sienna, he says, was too simple and faint-hearted. He did not treat his patrons strenuously enough. We should be discreet with magnanimous friends, but "importunate and pressing towards those who are avaricious, ungrateful, and discourteous; . . . to be modest with such people is an absurdity and a wrong." And so say we.

The lady artist is nothing new, and Vasari is no despiser of the sex. "It is a remarkable

fact," he begins in his life of Properzia de' Rossi, "that whenever women have at any time devoted themselves to the study of any art or the exercise of any talent they have for the most part acquitted themselves well . . . as did our Properzia de' Rossi of Bologna, a maiden of rich gifts, who was equally excellent" (mark this!) "with others in the disposition of all household matters, while she gained a point of distinction in many sciences well calculated to excite the envy not only of women but of men also." We have seen that Pliny had but a low opinion of the public appearance of women. Could anything be more handsome than our good Vasari's pronouncement upon the other side? His thoughtful reference to domestic affairs seems to suggest that the emancipation of woman was a vexed question in his days. If we wanted further confirmation of his partisanship, we should find it in his reference to Diana Ghisi, the lady engraver. "Nay, what is still more remarkable, he (Ghisi) has a daughter called Diana, who engraves so admirably well that the thing is a perfect miracle; for my own part—who have seen herself—and a very pleasing and graceful maiden she is—as well as her works, which are most exquisite, I have been utterly astonished thereby."

A terrible ladies' man, our good Vasari! See his reference to the four beautiful daughters of Signor Amilcar Anguisciola—Sophonisba, Lucia, Europa, and Anna, "who is still only a little girl." "At a word, the house of the

Signor Anguisciola (the most fortunate father of an admirable and honoured family) appears to me to be the very abode and dwelling-place of painting, or rather of all the excellences." The most thorough-going advocate of the emancipation of women must admit that the great historian of art blows their trumpet with no uncertain sound.

As we might expect from one who was so reliable as to have the *entrée* into so many households full of budding female genius, Vasari is eminently respectable by nature. Even the man-artist should know his place, thinks he.

"Alfonso Lombardi, a person of attractive and youthful appearance," used to wear too many gold ornaments for his biographer's taste, "proving himself thereby to be rather the vain and idle follower of a court than a meritorious artist conscientiously seeking the acquirement of an honest fame." Vasari recommends a golden mean. You must not dress beyond your station, but above all things beware of Bohemianism. Is he speaking with prophetic knowledge of a certain class of French and English art-students when he describes the companions of Jacone, the friend of Aristotile da San Gallo? We are almost disposed to think so, the parallel is so close. "Art," he says, "just at that time had fallen in Florence into the hands of a company of persons who thought more of amusing and enjoying themselves than of the labour required for the success of their works; their principal delight being to get together in the wine-shops and

other places, where, in their absurd jargon, they would decry the productions of other artists, or censure the lives of those who laboured steadily and passed their time with respectable companions. . . . A company, or rather a horde of young men, who, under the pretext of living like philosophers, demeaned themselves like so many swine or other brute beasts. Never did they wash either hands or face or head or beard; they did not sweep their houses, they never made their beds save twice in each month only, they used the cartoons of their pictures for their tables, and drank only from the bottle or the pitcher." Scandalous indeed—though we seem to remember that Michel Angelo, the revered of Vasari, was somewhat sparing of the basin and the towel. Anyhow, Jacone painted some good pictures, and if he had listened to the rebuke of our good Giorgio, which forcibly suggests to our recollection Hogarth's series of the industrious and idle apprentices, he might have escaped his sordid end. These untidy young men met Vasari as he was returning from Monte Oliveto, a monastery outside Florence, in that mood of sedate self-complacency which is the natural concomitant of a good day's work conscientiously performed, and perhaps not illiberally rewarded. He had even been able to allow himself the luxury of a horse to ride home from his labours. This seems to have excited the derision, or more probably the envy of these young men. "Well done, Giorgio!" said Jacone. "How goes it with your worship?" "It goes excel-

lently well with my worship," responded Giorgio, "seeing that I who was once as poor as any one of you all, can now count my three thousand crowns or more. You have considered me a simpleton, but the monks and priests hold me to be something better. Formerly I was serving among you, but now this servant whom you see serves me, as well as my horse. I used to wear such clothes as we painters are glad to put on when we are poor, but now I am clothed in velvet. In old times I went on foot, now I ride on horseback. Thus you see, my good Jaco, my worship does excellently well. God give you good day, Jacone."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE STORY OF THE GEM.

SMALLEST of all works of art, yet most precious when its dimensions are considered, is the engraved gem. No thing of beauty fashioned by the hand of man has had a longer history. The gem is engraved on even the hardest of the precious stones, to injure which in the least degree destroys their value. Gold jewels of priceless beauty have been ruthlessly sold by the marauders for what the mere metal would fetch. Splendid plate has been melted down to aid some hopeless cause. Sculptures and mosaics have been battered by barbarian hands. The engraved gem wrenched from the body of its fallen owner or pilfered from the shrine is protected by its precious material and by its magic virtues. Throughout all ancient history, during the long twilight of the Middle Ages, and even in modern days, the precious stone, and the engraved gem more than all, has been venerated as a talisman to ward off disease and all the powers of darkness. Most beautiful and most refined, it yet was made at first to serve the daily purposes of sealing treasure chests and documents and contracts. Secluded for its

artistic beauties from common use, it has become the cherished ornament of kings and emperors. Easy to pilfer, and easy to conceal, it has been abstracted at their deaths from murder, or on the field of battle, and carried to some distant country, where its new and ignorant possessor has never known its origin, and has considered it the work of nature, or the solace of the idle wandering years of Israel when they came out of Egypt. So throughout a thousand years he has adorned with it the shrines that contained the relics of the Saviour and the Saints. Then at last, after these vicissitudes, the gem, always valued and generally misunderstood, has emerged as that object of art the collection of which, through the associations of classical antiquity, stamps its collector with the highest mark of culture and refinement.

Small though it be, the engraving of the gem entails the most unremitting careful loving labour. Ten years have not been considered too much to spend upon a single masterpiece. But what matters a generation to the life of a work of art that counts its years by thousands? We speak of "engraved gems," but the precious stone is not incised by a graver guided by the hand. The earliest artist chipped a soft stone with a harder flint, but at Nineveh had already been invented, two thousand years at least before the birth of Christ, the drill fixed to a drum and turned by a wheel. The simplicity of the engraver's tools has remained unaltered. The Greek artist would have seated himself unem-

barrassed before the engraver's table of modern times. Both turned the wheel and pressed the precious stone against their various drills charged with oil and the dust of the corundum. This is the hard basis of the ruby, the sapphire, the emerald, and many other precious stones. To cut their glittering facets the Indian lapidary uses corundum to this day. With these simple materials the engraver can slowly but surely eat into all the precious stones. The diamond alone he has never satisfactorily engraved, but in revenge has used its biting dust to drill the rest.

When the engraver hollows out his figures upon the stone, so that, if a wax impression were taken, it would appear raised in relief, his work is an "intaglio."

When, having chosen a stone in layers of different colours, such as the sardonyx, he cuts away the upper layer till only figures are left raised upon a layer of a different shade—so that a wax impression would be a hollow concave mould—the engraving is a cameo. This curious word is found in the thirteenth-century Low Latin as "camahutum," derived perhaps from the Syriac word for charm, "chemeia," or else from "camaut," the camel's hump.

In the arid early periods of artistic history we will not tarry long. The prototype of the classic gem is found in the piece of reed or wood with which the Assyrian rolled flat the clay plastered round the lid of his vase or chest of treasures.

This seal he wore by a string round his neck ready for all the needs of life. To copy the reed cylinder in the more durable stone was but a step, and so we have preserved to us in the British Museum the actual signet of Sennacherib. In Egypt the seal takes the form of the sacred beetle, "Scarabæus"—often most realistically carved—as the symbol of immortality or the sun. This shape is carried by the Phœnician merchant to every part of the Mediterranean Sea. The Etruscan and the Greek employ it, but as their art improves they both discard it, and imprint their own individuality upon the gem in shape and subject. Wearying of the winged Assyrian lions or the dog-headed Egyptian god Horus, they illustrate their own mythology. The Assyrians had contented themselves with the stones of their native rivers and mountains, the lapis lazuli and the amethyst, but the Greeks, through the Phœnicians, who dealt in the riches of Arabia, had a wider choice. In the culminating age of Alexander they employed perhaps every precious stone except the diamond.

Whence the Etruscans came has been and always will be a matter of conjecture. "They do not," says Dionysius of Halicarnassus, "resemble any people in language or manners." Their finest period corresponds in date, 500 years before the birth of Christ, to the archaic period of the Greeks, who very likely learned the art from them. Greek gem-engraving attained perfection first in Sicily and Magna Grecia, where were colonies neighbouring on

the Etruscans, far richer than their mother-country of Greece proper. The Greeks full soon improved on the stunted Etruscan type. Their glorious victories over the Persian invaders heralded the golden age of Pheidias. With the age of Praxiteles, the matchless sculptor in 364 B.C., we find upon the gem the slender graceful forms of the finest bas-reliefs. Again and again are found copied with more or less fidelity the lifesize masterpiece in marble. Sometimes the gem alone preserves a record of some noted statue which is lost for ever. Upon a gem of Nisus is reproduced Alexander holding the thunderbolts of Zeus, the celebrated picture of Apelles. Art can no further go when Alexander reigns. The names of all the engravers we shall never learn, for the gem was a private seal, and if it bore a name it was more often that of the owner than the artist. Some few have come down to us on which is inscribed that "Philo" or "Nicander made it." The name of Pyrgoteles has been preserved. He alone might engrave the portrait of his master, Alexander the Great. For others of inferior talents to dare was sacrilege.

So we come to Roman times, when Macedon declined, and Italy became the home of wealth and power. The Romans even of Republican days held gem-engraving an important art. As they increased in riches their love for gems became intense. Pliny even attributes the downfall of the Republic to a quarrel originating from the sale of a ring. The demagogue Drusus

and Cæpio the senator fell out while bidding at an auction, and thus were laid the foundations of the feud which culminated in the Social War. Not once alone has the gem played an important part in the fortunes of a country. When Marcellus fell into the Carthaginian ambush at Venusium, his ring was used by Hannibal to seal the forged dispatches with which he hoped to sap the loyalty of neighbouring towns. Pompey had dedicated to Jupiter the spoils of Mithridates, the first gem-collector in a royal line of which the Empress Josephine was perhaps the last. Julius Cæsar in emulation of his rival offered six cabinets of gems to Venus Victrix, whom he called his ancestor. From Seneca we learn the curious tale that when Cæsar gave back his forfeited life to a suppliant enemy, he held out his foot for him to kiss. This the friends of Cæsar said he did, not from arrogance, but only to show off the splendid gems upon his sandals.

The Romans could not vie with the Greeks in cutting the intaglio, but in the engraving of the cameo they were their equals, if not superior. In the reign of Hadrian the cameo reached its highest excellence. Again and again we find perpetuated the melancholy beauty of Hadrian's favourite Antinous, who was drowned untimely in the Nile. One emperor dissipates the cherished treasures of another. Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher, sells the gems of Hadrian, the lover of art, to pay the expenses of the Marcomannic war.

Cameos of huge size and matchless workmanship have been bequeathed to us. Largest of all is the celebrated so-called "Apotheosis of Augustus." Thirteen inches long by eleven wide this splendid stone of five layers has unique historic interest. When Constantine founded his new capital at Byzantium he took this treasure with him. There it remained set in a splendid golden setting until the day when Baldwin II., the last Frankish emperor of Constantinople, wished to incite St. Louis to a new crusade. Then he pawned it to the French king, together with the "Crown of Thorns" and the "Swaddling Clothes of the Infant Saviour." For these priceless relics and the cameo St. Louis paid a sum amounting to two hundred thousand pounds. Thus the cameo found its way to the treasury of the Sainte Chapelle in Paris. There throughout the Middle Ages it received the homage due to a gem supposed to represent the triumph of Joseph at the Court of Pharaoh. In 1791, when the Assembly determined to sell the treasures of the Sainte Chapelle, Louis XVI. made an ineffectual protest, but the cameo and some few other things were deposited in the Bibliothèque. Its eventful history does not end here.

On the night of the 16th or 17th of February, 1804, it was stolen and despoiled of its Byzantine mounting by some thievish vandals for the value of the gold. The gem was about to be offered for sale at Amsterdam when the police stepped in and saved it once more for France.

We are accustomed to speak of the "Dark Ages," but do we fully appreciate that darkness of a thousand years, when the brilliant and gracious completeness of classical antiquity gave place to the crabbed inventions of the Gothic invader? Lost from its sunny Italian home, art lingered on in the foreign twilight of Byzantium, whither fled for refuge the artists of the West. When it revived to supply the demands of new masters who were learning the lesson of magnificence and luxury, it had lost the memory of its former triumphs and drew its first feeble inspirations from the gloomy forests of Germany. In those ages of barbaric inroad to even the most learned the origin of the antique gem was a mystery. The best informed, all ignorant of Greek, could only hazard a guess that engraved stones were the work of the children of Israel during their years of wandering in the wilderness, and so they called them "pierres d'Israel," or "Jews' stones." A fact such as this gives new force to the meaning of the term, "The revival of letters."

We shall see to what uses the gem inscribed with the mysterious Greek characters which none could understand, was presently applied. Meanwhile the rise of Christianity had its influence upon the fortunes of the gem. The later emperors were Illyrians, Franks, and Goths, who brought with them a horde of barbarous companions as their court officials, to oust the former patrons of the art. When Christianity gained strength, it struck another blow by

condemning the mythological subjects which the artist delighted to engrave. The use of elaborate signets was discouraged by the early Church. Clemens Alexandrinus in the second century restricts his hearers to the use of the simple devices of the anchor, the lyre, the ship, the dove, and the fisherman, symbols pagan enough, if he had only bethought him of it. The "Good Shepherd," the eventual symbol of the Church, was of later introduction. They shrank at first from portraying the Son of Man. So, apart from the intrinsic evidence of its Renaissance origin, the famous emerald of the Vatican upon which the head of Christ was engraved must be pronounced a forgery.

It was supposed to have been made by order of Pontius Pilate, and presented to Tiberius. It was treasured up by the Roman and Byzantine emperors, and by their Ottoman successors, until it was paid by the sultan to Innocent VIII. as a more than equivalent ransom for his brother, who had fallen into the hands of the pope. In reality it is neither antique, nor even Byzantine, but a mere copy from a medal of the time of Innocent VIII.

The fish was most popular from the outset because the Greek name ΙΧΘΥΣ contains the initials of the sentence Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτῆρ, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour."

With those, too, who remained pagan, oriental mysticism ousted the legends of the old mythology. Finally, the combination of paganism and

oriental demonology with Christianity resulted in those strange unintelligible sects, the Gnostics. The later glory of Greek civilization was to be found at Alexandria, and here these sects, who were so profuse in their use of gems, arose. The Gnostics embodied, it has been said, the spirit of the old religion warring against the Church. They were intellectually-minded persons who could not remain in the old paganism when the whole world was astir with the new and vital truths of Christianity. The Gnostic resented the necessity of sharing the new belief with the common herd—of worshipping humbly beside the man who might have been his slave. So, asserting that the intellectual few could alone understand the essence of Christianity, they left the ordinary form to the multitude, and formed esoteric sects out of a mixture of Christianity and pagan mysteries. Their prolific cult of symbolism found its natural outlet in the use of the talismanic properties of the engraved stone. We no longer find the beautiful classical subject, but cabalistic signs and monstrous figures, borrowed from the Mithraic creed of Pontus and the worship of Egypt. Their favourite symbol of all is the Abraxas-god made up of the serpent, the eagle, the human torso, and the scourge. To these they added Hebrew and Syriac inscriptions and mystic numerals, while beneath their creed was an underlying substratum of astrology.

Christianity and Gnosticism soon put an end to the artistic life of the gem. At Byzantium,

whither the western artists fled for refuge from the Gothic invader, the art lingered on.

Strange to relate, while art declines in Europe, the Persians revived it under that Sassanian dynasty which annihilated the Roman power in Asia, and struggled on until its conquest by the Arabs in 651 A.D. Thus, when western civilization has lost it, the art is found again enriched with the utmost wealth of material at least, almost in its original home.

To the Arabs, under a stricter rule than that of the early Christians, only inscriptions were allowed by the Mohammedan religion. The inscriptions on their seals are in the fine running hand which is characteristic of the Arabs. Such a seal was that which, inscribed with the words, "The slave Abraham relying upon the Merciful," Napoleon I. picked up with his own hand during his campaign in Egypt. This he afterwards always carried about, as did Napoleon III. By him it was bequeathed to the late Prince Imperial. "As regards my son," so runs the will, "I desire that he will keep as a talisman" (how the old superstition recurs!) "the seal which I used to wear attached to my watch." The prince carried it fastened by a string round his neck, but its talismanic powers, alas! were of no avail against the cruel Zulu assegai.

With Gothic time begin ten centuries of darkness. A Gothic gem cut on a hard stone is hard indeed to find. The art itself is lost, and for five hundred years the Gothic seal is incised in metal. Love of the art gives place to adora-

tion of an amulet, whose origin is buried in oblivion. Every engraved gem had its value as a talisman to ward off disease and danger. None were too rough for the goldsmith to mount in the mediæval seal. The legends of antiquity are turned wholesale to Christian uses. The triple Bacchic mask of the Roman stage becomes a representation of the Trinity, as a legend on the metal mount attests, "Hæc est Trinitatis imago." "Every veiled female head," as Mr. King says, "passed for a Madonna or a Magdalene." . . . "Isis nursing Horus could not but serve for the Virgin and the Infant Saviour." Most curious of all, Thalia holding her mask is translated into Herodias carrying the head of John the Baptist, "whilst the skipping little Bacchic genius, her usual companion, becomes the daughter of Herodias, who danced to such ill purpose; and so they appear on a seal of the fourteenth century, with the allusive motto, "Jesus est amor meus." "Jupiter with his eagle at his side did duty amongst Charles V.'s jewels for the Evangelist, but the unlucky Pan and his satyrs were for ever banished from the finger, and their forms now appear recast as devils in later pictures of the realms of torment: and all this in virtue of their caprine extremities." But the highest glory ever attained by a work of the engraver was that of the cameo of the abbey of St. Germain des Près in Paris, which enjoyed for 1,000 years the transcendent (though baseless) fame of adorning the espousal ring of the Virgin Mary, and of preserving the

portraits after the life of herself and Joseph. It is in reality the seal of "Alpheus with Aretho," two unknown Roman freedmen.

The great repositories of gems in these later days were the shrines of the saints. On that of the three kings of Cologne were 226 gems incrusted. The shrine was made in 1170 to contain the skulls of the Three Wise Men from the East. These were brought from Constantinople, and presented by the Emperor Francis I. to the Archbishop of Cologne. In 1794, on the advance of the French army, all the cathedral treasures were taken to Arnberg. In 1804 they were solemnly brought back—as the Ark was brought back from the Philistines—but during the interval the shrine had been crushed, and many a gem stolen. It was, however, repaired, and may now be seen at Cologne.

The shrine of Marburg was made in 1250 to contain the bones of Elizabeth, Landgravine of Thuringen and Hesse, canonized in 1235. On this were 824 precious stones, of which many were engraved gems. In 1810 the shrine was taken to Cassel till 1814 by order of the Westphalian government, and during that interval all the engraved gems but one were stolen. One was the celebrated luminous gem believed to give light in the hours of darkness, and called the "Karfunkel of Marburg." The people of Marburg regarded the engraving on the gems as the work of nature, so utterly had all knowledge of the civilization of antiquity departed.

But at last comes the Renaissance, when the

gem comes by its own again as far as due appreciation is concerned. "Towards the middle of the fifteenth century," says Mr. King, "Italian art was fast growing more classical, having gradually freed itself from the trammels of Gothicism in proportion as the power of the German emperors waned away all over the peninsula. . . . The restoration of St. Peter's chair to a native line of popes after its long removal and occupation by a Gallican dynasty, contributed to this result. Pope Paul II. (1464-1471) formed a collection of gems, and is said to have been a martyr to them, as he died of the weight and the chill of the rings with which he loaded his fingers.

The reason why the art rose to perfection so quickly after long years of disuse, was that the skilled hand of the goldsmith practised in "niellatura" and all miniature work was ready to undertake the task, when guided, perhaps, by the artistic refugee from fallen Constantinople. This is the golden age of cameo cutting. The demand for them as ornaments for superb gold and enamelled neck-chains and hat medallions, and for inlaying in plate, passed all belief. To this period belongs the fatal ring that Elizabeth had given to Essex. When he lay under sentence of death his messenger, Lady Nottingham, treacherously abstained from returning it to the queen; so Elizabeth made no sign of relenting to the anxiously expecting favourite, who perished on the scaffold. From his daughter, Lady Devereux, it has descended in an un-

broken female line down to the present time. It is a cameo bust of the "virgin" queen, on a sardonyx of three layers. The ring is simple, and enamelled on the back with flowers in blue. Horace Walpole says: "There is no evidence that she had much taste for painting, but she loved pictures of herself. In them she could appear really handsome." So it was natural that her portrait should appear upon the ring; but whether she valued the art of gem-engraving for its own sake is more than doubtful. It is pleasant to turn to George Carey, second Lord Hunsdon, a true lover of the art. When he died in 1603 he bequeathed to his wife, Elizabeth Spencer, and afterwards to his only daughter, Lady Berkeley, the celebrated Hunsdon onyx, which is three and a quarter inches square. He gave strict injunctions that it was to be transmitted to his posterity with other jewels, to be preserved "soo longe as the conscience of my heires shall have grace and honestie to perform my will: for that I esteem them right jewels and monuments worthie to be kept for their beauty, rareness, and that for monie they are not to be matched, nor the like yet known to be found in this realme." From the wording of the first sentence we might conclude that this true lover of art was already imbued with a presentiment of the Philistinism of later days. But so far as refers to this cameo, a sardonyx of three layers, representing Perseus and Andromeda, his wishes have been respected.

From 1550, with the loss of the rich art-loving popes like Leo X. and Clement VII., and kings like Charles V. and Francis I., and, above all, Lorenzo de' Medici (1448-1492), and with the frequency of wars and tumults, until the accession of Louis XIV. gem-engraving declined. When, after the barren seventeenth century, the art awoke in the eighteenth, it was to an age of imitation and unscrupulous forgery. This is the "age of the *dilettanti*." The intaglio supersedes the cameo once more. Originality of design is no longer aimed at. Artists are for the most part content to make repeated copies of well-known antiques. They prided themselves less on their professional skill than on their adroitness in imposing their copies upon the collector as originals. "For every antique gem of note," says Mr. King, "fully a dozen of its counterfeits are now in circulation." "One of the most difficult things," says one of the greatest living authorities upon gems, writing in "The Nineteenth Century," "was to simulate the peculiar appearance of the salient surfaces of antique gems. After infinite endeavours, some more than usually astute Roman gem-engraver found that the best way was to cram his modern-antique gems down the throats of turkeys kept in coops for the purpose, when the continual attrition which they received from contact with other stones and pebbles crammed into the bird's crop at the same time, ultimately induced almost exactly the desired appearance." Poor antique gems they would most skilfully retouch and im-

prove, inscribing an antique artist's name upon them, through the mistaken belief that the names upon the antique gems are always those of the engraver. Casanova, the painter, mentions a fine antique gem which was unsaleable until a name was inscribed upon it, when it at once fetched four times the sum first asked. They would buy up antique paste gems at a high price, and having copied their subjects, they would destroy the paste, "thus at one stroke securing the antique spirit for their own compositions and safety against the detection of plagiarism." Lastly, they would fabricate the ingenious "doublet," made out of a glass paste moulded from an antique cameo. This was backed with a layer of real sard, carefully fixed by a transparent cement. The writer remembers being present at a bargain between one of the best known Parisian dealers, a true gentleman of the old school, and one of the greatest living authorities upon gems. A "doublet" deceived them both; it was sold in good faith, and accepted in the same spirit. The chance insertion of a finger-nail exposed the fraud. The raised subject of the cameo flew off, and the bargain had to be unmade. Let the inexperienced beware when two such experts were deceived.

The arch-forger was a Hanoverian spy upon the movements of the Young Pretender, Baron Stosch. He formed a huge collection, in which, though much was genuine, most were false, and sold it to Frederic of Prussia. To Baron Stosch

a M. Hardieu was one day exhibiting the ring of Michel Angelo, said to be the work of Pyrgoteles, and one of the chief glories of the collection of the Bibliothèque in Paris. This ring, which commemorated the birth of Alexander the Great, he presently missed. Knowing with whom he had to deal, he kept his counsel. Without expressing his suspicion, he privately despatched a servant for a strong emetic, which he insisted that the baron should swallow then and there, with the result that the missing ring was happily re-discovered.

With this century gem-cutting has gradually declined. True artists have slowly disappeared, and those workmen who remain confine themselves to the cutting of shell cameos, which were unknown to antiquity, and are carved out of the soft material of the Indian conch.

This tale of fraud and imposition fitly ends with the greatest forgery of all.

Three thousand gems, more or less antique in style, were executed for the Prince Poniatowsky, who died at Florence in 1833, by the best Roman artists of the day. Opinions differ as to the motives of the prince. Some say he was the victim of a fraud combined amongst the engravers; "others again defend his knowledge at the expense of his honesty," and assert that he intended to palm them off as antiques himself. The true solution is to be found, perhaps, in the personal vanity of the prince. He loved the art, and fondly believed that he himself could inspire the modern engraver, by his choice of subjects,

with the true antique spirit. The sums he paid must have been immense. A fraud dies hard. The Poniatowsky gems are now discredited, but once the government was nearly persuaded to pay £60,000 for a third of the collection. Supineness saved them from this catastrophe. Since then they have been sold for the mere value of their gold settings, a fate unkind, for of many the workmanship is beautiful. In 1858 there were people who still had such a blind faith in them as to publish a most costly work upon these gems, in the full belief that they were undoubted masterpieces of antiquity.

CHAPTER XV.

JEWELS AND PRECIOUS STONES.

SOMETIMES we have held in our hands a splendid jewel of the period of the Renaissance, glittering with the shifting sparkle of enamel and precious stones, and experienced a poignant regret that it could not reflect from its shining facets some image of the events that it has witnessed. No thing of beauty could tell a more interesting story than the jewel. An object of personal adornment, it has been the close companion of those by whom history was made—has nestled on the bosoms of lovely maidens and stately dames, and listened to the secrets their beating hearts contained. If, in the opinion of the Middle Ages, the gem could draw an influence to ward off danger and disease from the stars and planets that are so distant, surely the pure gold of the jewel might have communion with the souls of those to whom it has clung so close. The artist, at any rate, who made one of these tiny masterpieces, should have felt a keener pleasure at the thought that his work was meant as a last enhancement of the charms of what is fairest in creation. Necklace, "jazeran," love token, or betrothal ring, it was sure to be the

subject of more personal delight than any other form of art. As it lies closest to the human form, so it stays by it longest. Our knowledge of the jewellery of the ancients has come to us from their custom of burying personal ornaments in the tomb.

One melancholy fact we have to notice, that the jewel, besides being the victim of war, has also been always subject to the vicissitudes of fashion. Thousands of splendid works have been melted up to pay for a campaign, even as the papal jewels were melted by Cellini when Clement VII. was besieged in Rome. Thousands, again, have been melted down when the vogue was changed. The hat medallion, for instance, came into fashion in 1458. Previous to that time hats had been adorned with something in the nature of phylacteries, sold at the monasteries and at pilgrim centres as preventives of disease. But with the period of Charles VIII. they became ornaments of splendid and elaborate workmanship. Many bronze casts of them still exist, but how few of the original gold! As at the present time, there have no doubt always been miserable huckstering jewellers who have the face to advertise their readiness to refashion the beautiful heirlooms of ancient families.

The French draw a distinction between "joaillerie," and "bijouterie." The first implies jewels in which the precious stone is the principal feature. The second constitutes that far more artistic class in which the goldsmith and enameller has had unrestricted freedom. It

is obvious that the latter, as containing more gold to melt, is likely to have suffered the most. The settings of diamonds are rarely of much account; the stones are all in all. A fine pendant, in which the gold work is the predominant feature, once melted down, is a work of art completely lost. If interesting memories attaching to precious stones are more common than those of jewels proper, the fault lies in the perishable nature of the latter.

A curious historical circumstance preserved many jewels for some hundreds of years in the city of Zaragossa. When the Moors of Cordova cast off their allegiance to the Caliph of the East, about 755 A.D., it was no longer possible for them to make their pilgrimages to Mecca. They set up a substitute in the mosque of Cordova. When the taking of Jerusalem by the Turks, in 1076, incited Peter the Hermit to preach the first Crusade in 1095, the Spaniards were forbidden to go as crusaders to the holy city, on the ground that they were better employed against the infidel on their own soil. The Castilians therefore set up a holy place at Santiago. Then the Aragonese, not choosing to worship at a foreign (*i.e.*, Castilian) shrine, set up at Zaragossa a rival place of worship, that of the "Virgin of the Pillar." The legend runs, that Santiago (St. James), soon after the Crucifixion, asked the Virgin for permission to preach the gospel in Spain. Having "kissed her hand," he came to Zaragossa, converted eight pagans, and fell asleep. Then, on January 2nd,

A.D. 40, the angels of heaven brought the Virgin alive from Palestine on a jasper pillar, and carried her back again, after she had commanded Santiago to put up a chapel. However that may be, in the cathedral "El Pilar," a building of clustering domes, roofed with green and white glazed tiling, is the shrine of the Virgin of the Pillar. Therein is a figure of the Virgin rudely carved in black wood on an alabaster pillar which works miraculous cures. As thank-offerings for these cures it has been the custom to present jewels of all descriptions to the shrine. Here many remained, until, about 1870, they were sold to complete the building of the cathedral. They were but a small part of what were once to be seen. The "complimentary gift" of the chapter to Marshal Lannes, in the French invasion, was estimated at the value of 130,000 dollars. Some specimens of what he left may be seen in the South Kensington Museum. Enamelled representations of the Virgin on her pillar are a favourite form; but the collection includes jewels of every shape, from a little gold-mounted fir-cone to a parrot with a jacinth set upon its breast. Other and finer specimens—masterpieces of the Spanish goldsmith—are in private hands. Amongst those with which the writer is familiar is a small cross carved somewhat architecturally in solid gold. It is set on one side with diamonds; on the other it is ornamented with black and white enamel and tiny sparks of red. Though far from being the largest, it is undoubtedly one of the grandest specimens of

jewellery ever made. The South Kensington Museum might have possessed this and others, if the money had been forthcoming. Could we learn the private histories attaching to these jewels, the votive offerings of rich and suffering pilgrims, there would be unfolded many a touching tale of pious faith and thanksgiving, and also, we fear, of heartrending disappointment.

In the same collection which contains the beautiful cross just mentioned, there is a circular gold medallion, with the remains of an enamelled setting, which was dredged up from the bottom of the Grand Canal at Venice. Did its wearer lie stark and cold beneath those olive-green waters, or was it perhaps only dropped by accident by its owner returning from some brilliant scene of pleasure? Hard by is a Spanish jewel in the favourite form of a little ship, or "nef," which was found in Ireland. It is a relic of the miserable flight of the battered Armada, when, after the great fight off Calais, the wearied remnant of the fleet fled northwards, doubled Cape Wrath, and came to a sad end on the inhospitable Irish shore.

Next comes a curious spherical gold ornament on the model of an "armillary sphere," an astronomical machine in which the "circles" of the world, such as the equator and the ecliptic, are marked in their relative positions by hoops of metal. Such things were worn attached to a long chain hanging down the front of the dress from the centre of the waist girdle. This one contains a "bezoar" stone—a concretion taken

from the stomach of an animal, and supposed to have occult protecting properties. This relic was presented by Charles V. to the wife of the adventurer, "stout Cortez," to commemorate the event—

> ". . . . When with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
> Looked at each other with a wild surprise,
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

In the family of Cortez it has remained until the present day.

Here, too, is a tiny prayer-book splendidly bound in enamelled metal, and small enough to be suspended by a chain round the neck of the Emperor Charles V., for whom it was made. Lastly, there is a "George," which belonged to Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and which he may have worn on the day of his execution. It consists of an onyx cameo set round with large rose diamonds. The back is finely enamelled. When, if ever, this was handed back to its royal donor, he little guessed that within a few short years he, too, would be the chief actor in another "memorable scene," and that his splendid pictures and jewels would be scattered to the four winds of heaven.

Monarchs frequently received New Year's gifts from their faithful subjects. Jewels were a fitting offering for a "Virgin Queen." Horace Walpole notes that the chivalrous Sir Philip Sidney presented to Elizabeth one year a whip set with jewels, and another year a castle enriched with diamonds. Another gift was "a

flower of gold garnished with sparkes of diamonds, rubyes, and ophals, with an agath of her Majestie's visnomy and a perle pendante with devises on it given by eight maskers" in the twenty-fourth year of her reign. Elizabeth's jeweller was Nicholas Hilliard, celebrated for his miniatures. One of his jewels contained portraits of Henry VII., Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Queen Mary. On the top was an enamelled representation of the Battle of Bosworth, and on the reverse the red and white roses. Charles I. purchased this jewel from Hilliard's son. A very interesting agate cameo, Walpole says, belonged to a Duchess of Leeds. It combined the portraits of Elizabeth and the ill-fated Essex, whose name is inscribed as her champion knight.

A gold chain once stood Ferdinand the Catholic in good stead when he was leaving a court of law at which he had been presiding. In Prescott's words, "As the party was issuing from a little chapel contiguous to the royal saloon, and just as the king was descending a flight of stairs, a ruffian darted from an obscure recess, in which he had concealed himself early in the morning, and aimed a blow with a short sword or knife at the back of Ferdinand's neck. Fortunately the edge of the weapon was turned by a gold chain or collar which he was in the habit of wearing." But for this he would certainly have died, for the wound was deep and serious. Doubtless Ferdinand continued to wear the ornament which had saved his life. Εὐτυχῶς τῷ φέροντι is the motto of a Greek gem with

which we are acquainted, and in like manner the gold chain of Ferdinand was lucky for the wearer. His wife, Isabella of Castile, had a gracious custom. When travelling she attired herself in the costume of the country, borrowing for that purpose the jewels and other ornaments of the ladies, and returning them with liberal additions. At the end of her will she says: "I beseech the king my lord that he will accept all my jewels, or such as he shall select, so that, seeing them, he may be reminded of the singular love I always bore him while living, and that I am now waiting for him in a better world; by which remembrance he may be encouraged to live the more justly and holily in this."

What Odysseys of adventure these trinkets may pass through! Listen to the story of the Sancy diamond. It was said to have been brought from Constantinople, and to have adorned the helmet of Charles the Bold, who lost it and his life at the battle of Granson. It was found by a soldier, and sold by him for two francs to a monk, who in his turn sold it for three. Then it was lost sight of; but in 1589 we find it amongst the treasures of Antonio, King of Portugal. This prince mortgaged it to De Sancy, the King of France's treasurer, who eventually became its owner for the sum of 100,000 livres. It remained long in the possession of the Sancy family. Henry III. borrowed it from them. It was to have served the purpose of raising a body of Swiss, but the servant who was charged to take it to the king

was attacked by robbers and put to death. It was believed that the diamond was lost. All research was made, and at last it was discovered that the servant had been assassinated in the forest of Dole, and that, by the kindness of the curé, he had been buried in the cemetery of the village. "Then," said the Baron de Sancy, "my diamond is not lost." It was actually recovered from the body of the faithful but unfortunate servant, who had swallowed it in the moment of danger. The diamond again disappeared in 1792, when the royal jewels of France were stolen on September 17 from the Garde-Meuble, a short time after the inventory made by order of the Constituent Assembly was concluded. Many were recovered by Napoleon I., who caused search to be made all over Europe for the missing treasures, and spent large sums to get them back.

At this period, indeed, the French government had been much troubled with diamonds. The episode of the Diamond Necklace, which Carlyle so magnificently describes, was one of the most astonishing intrigues with which any work of art has ever been connected. Not everyone has the courage to struggle through the philosophical reflections which the great historian makes upon the subject, although the persevering are rewarded with one passage at least, concerning poor Marie Antoinette, which is among the finest of all his rhetorical declamations. The story, apart from the romance with which Dumas has embellished it, is briefly this.

About the year 1770 one Boehmer was joaillier-bijoutier to Louis XV. He had an ambition to surpass himself in the production of a diamond necklace which should transcend all previous efforts. The finest stones were searched for far and wide, such as should be fit to grace the neck of Madame Dubarry, the king's mistress. The necklace was an elaborate work of art, consisting of seventeen large diamonds as big as filberts, and an infinity of smaller ones intricately arranged. Its value was nearly £100,000. Unfortunately Louis XV. died in 1774, and Madame Dubarry's reign was over. Now, the necklace was so valuable that only a king could purchase it. Boehmer had hopes that it might please the Infanta of Portugal, but there was no money to spare in any of the capitals of Europe. Even Marie Antoinette was compelled to deny herself the luxury.

Such was the state of affairs when Prince Louis de Rohan, ambassador at Vienna, was recalled to Paris. He had fathered certain *bon-mots* directed against Maria Theresa, which displeased her daughter, Marie Antoinette. Consequently, he found upon his return that he was excluded from the court. He was a weak man, and in his despair fell under the influence of Cagliostro, the arch-impostor, who preyed upon him in his retirement at Saverne, near Bar-sur-Aube.

Near the latter is a place called Fontette, whose last seigneur, descended illegitimately from Henri II., had died a pauper. He left a

daughter, Jeanne, who was bred up as a sort of companion and dressmaker by a charitable Countess Boulainvilliers, who, on the strength of Jeanne's descent, obtained for her a small court pension. Genteel poverty did not suit Jeanne de St. Remi of Fontette, countess, as she called herself, and "of a certain piquancy," as Carlyle loves to repeat. One fine summer's day she made a journey to Fontette, hoping to get back some remains of her paternal property. Her hopes were dashed, but she consoled herself with a private sentinel in the king's gendarmes, named Lamotte, whom she met and married. She styles herself in future Countess de Lamotte.

About this time Countess Boulainvilliers was staying at Saverne on a visit to Cardinal Prince Louis de Rohan. Here her companion, Countess de Lamotte, makes his acquaintance. Meanwhile, Countess Boulainvilliers dies, and her husband casts off the Lamottes. They retire to penury at Versailles, where they again meet Prince Louis de Rohan, who has come there on his usual spring visit.

It occurs to Madame de Lamotte to exploit De Rohan, whose one fixed idea is to regain the queen's favour. She tells him that she has access to the queen. She becomes a go-between, and carries messages to and from the palace, two hundred in all, at first verbal, and afterwards in writing, those purporting to come from the queen being forged with the aid of one Villette de Rétaux, a supposed valet of the queen.

De Rohan is soon persuaded by Madame Lamotte that the queen has been graciously pleased to allow him to disburse from his own pocket certain sums for charitable purposes on her behalf, money being scarce in the royal coffers. Madame Lamotte is always the intermediary to distribute the money for the queen.

Presently Madame Lamotte lets drop the tale of Boehmer and his wonderful unsaleable necklace, of which she has but recently heard some rumours. She "confesses at last, under oath of secrecy, her own private opinion that the queen wants this same necklace of all things: but dare not, for a stingy husband, buy it." The cardinal, suggests Madame Lamotte, might perhaps ingratiate himself with her majesty by becoming her agent to facilitate the acquisition of the necklace. There would be nothing presumptuous in that. Has he not already, as her private almoner, advanced charitable loans on her behalf?

At last, on the 28th of July, 1784, De Rohan has an interview at nightfall with the shadow of his beloved queen in the gardens of the palace of Versailles. She gives him a rose "with these ever-memorable words, 'Vous savez ce que cela veut dire!'" The cardinal, cherishing his precious rose, determines that the queen shall have her diamonds. That, of course, is the meaning of the mysterious sentence cut short by the alarm of approaching footsteps.

Meanwhile Madame Lamotte has stealthily intimated to Boehmer that the Cardinal Prince Louis de Rohan is the man to buy his necklace.

The Countess Lamotte will not personally take a hand in the bargain-making, no commission, or anything of that nature. She leaves it all to her majesty and the gilt-edged autographs. The queen, however, is unacquainted with business, it turns out, and refuses to write any autograph actually authorizing the cardinal to make a bargain, but writes to say that "the matter is of no consequence, and can be given up."

This makes the cardinal more eager than ever to do her the service.

On the 29th of January, 1785, "a middle course" is hit on. Boehmer is to write out his terms, which are 1,600,000 livres, to be paid in instalments. Agreed between Boehmer and Bassange, court jewellers, and Prince Cardinal Commendator Louis de Rohan.

Countess Lamotte takes this agreement to Versailles, and returns with it marked, "Bon—Marie Antoinette de France."

Rohan signs for Boehmer a receipt of delivery at his palace in Paris. The cardinal then hastens with the precious necklace in a casket to Versailles, whither, in the Countess Lamotte's apartments, enters "de par le Reine" queen's valet, Villette de Rétaux. He receives the necklace and casket, which vanish for ever!

But why does not the queen receive the Cardinal de Rohan in return for the necklace? Once he has seen her in the Œil de Bœuf, in the gallery of the palace of Versailles. She seems to look towards him, "does she not?" says

Countess de Lamotte. Except this and a few more autographs, nothing comes of it.

The cardinal returns to Saverne, and expostulates with his queen through the countess. Meanwhile Lamotte, the sentinel, has crossed the channel and has sold some of the diamonds, to Jeffreys, jeweller of Piccadilly, £10,000 worth, to Grey, 13, New Bond Street, some more, while Villette, at Amsterdam, sells others still.

On July 19th, the first instalment being due, is not forthcoming. On July 30th, a beggarly £1,500 comes from the "queen" to pay the interest on the first portion. Poor Boehmer accepts, but only as part payment. Presently the Countess Lamotte returns from Versailles, saying that the queen, if harassed, will deny ever having received the necklace!

This determines Boehmer to complain privately to Breteuil, the controller of the household, who, on August 15th, arrests De Rohan in that very Œil de Bœuf where he had so often eagerly watched for the signs of her majesty's relenting. There is barely time to send a note to his secretary, the Abbé Georgel, who burns all the gilt autographs before Breteuil's sheriff arrives to affix the seal of confiscation. There is a commotion in court circles. Her majesty is said to have been seen in floods of tears. Cagliostro and his wife, whom Countess Lamotte had conciliated when she first began her attempts on De Rohan, are in prison. The countess herself is brought from Bar-sur-Aube. Demoiselle Gay d'Oliva—an unfortunate woman of the Palais

Royal, who personated the queen at the fateful interview—is brought from Brussels. Villette, forger of the autographs, notably the one, "Bon—Marie Antoinette de France," which alone should have exposed the fraud, for she was of Austria, is haled back from Geneva.

The "Procès du Collier" lasted nine months. Carlyle's is the truest account possible of "the largest lie of the eighteenth century." Countess de Lamotte, branded "voleur," and imprisoned in the Salpetrière, either fell from the roof of her house while attempting to escape seizure for debt, or else was flung by someone out of the window.

Villette confessed, and ultimately was hanged at the Castle of St. Angelo at Rome, where Cagliostro also died under the auspices of the Inquisition. Gay d'Oliva married one Beausire, who eventually turned informer and counter of victims for the guillotine in the Luxembourg prison. Lamotte, on his wife's death—or murder—returned to Paris, and, after long imprisonment, escaped. Cardinal Prince Louis de Rohan was released from the Bastille on May 31, 1786. He was regarded by the revolutionary party as a victim of court intrigue! Elected to the Constituent Assembly, he was one of the very first to emigrate.

Poor Madame Dubarry, whose frail but good-natured character has been lately renovated, was unfortunate with her jewellery. She was disappointed of the great necklace of Boehmer, but she had collected plenty besides. One day her

jewels were stolen and carried off to England. The thief was captured, and Madame Dubarry made two visits to England to identify her diamonds. She seems to have succeeded in this preliminary, but justice—so often misnamed—put difficulties in her way. The authorities refused, for some reason, to hand over to her her own property, although they practically acknowledged her lawful ownership by making her pay over to the captors of the thief the reward which had been offered. On her return to France she very soon perished on the scaffold, accused perhaps of intriguing with the *emigrés* in England. Her jewels remain somewhere unclaimed, or have else been made away with.

Diamonds are an anxious possession, but use makes callous the owners of celebrated stones. The famous blue diamond of the Hope family, valued at about £40,000, was once exhibited at Marlborough House, where was formed what has become the South Kensington Museum. After the loan exhibition was over, the diamond was carefully hidden away. One day Mr. Hope called and said, "By the way, I will take my diamond." The curator was aghast; he had completely forgotten it. He sent for his assistant, who seemed equally at fault. After a painful moment, recollection burst upon him. He had put the diamond for extra safety into the base of one of the large glass cases, where it was found stowed away. The owner took it and carried it off, dropped loose into his waistcoat pocket.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ART OF THE GOLD AND SILVERSMITH.

In his "Panoplia," or series of woodcuts, Jost Amman, the Swiss engraver, represents the various processes of the trades and handicrafts of the sixteenth century. Amongst them is one which gives a realistic view of the conditions under which the gold and silversmith carried on his art. In a light and cheerful room, with a large window that offers no obstruction to the summer sun, may be seen men engaged in every process of the profession. Here, in the foreground, one is thinning a sheet of metal upon a wooden block. Close to him metal is being melted in a crucible placed upon a three-legged stool. At a long table which stretches away to the window a man is engaged in small repoussé work. On the other side of the table another is embossing the lid of a vase. Behind, on the left, a man works the bellows of a forge. At the nearer end of the table rises a cabinet, on the top of which are finished works, cups, tazzas, and a fine "hanap." Here, then, in a single room, is epitomized the whole handicraft, from the metal sheet to the finished masterpiece.

Most characteristic of the artistic feeling that pervaded the workshop of the Renaissance goldsmith is the tall vase containing flowers, to suggest forms for his designs, which is so placed in front of the window that it cannot fail to attract the eye. We look fruitlessly for such graces in the workshop of the nineteenth century. It would be hard, indeed, to find a single room where every process is carried through without external help. We might search the backyards of Soho and Clerkenwell in vain. The nearest approach to the sixteenth century workman would be a man who styles himself "embosser," and whose knowledge is confined to brazing and repoussé work, but who would not dream of jewelling, or enamelling, or engraving, or any of the other processes which constitute the art of the accomplished smith.

In the golden age of art handicrafts the apprentice who wished to become a master had to execute a masterpiece by himself in the hall or meeting-place of his guild. Thus was good workmanship insured in an age when overtime work was generally forbidden on the ground that nightwork resulted, as Erasmus, too, held, in bad productions. In those times each trade and craft had its patron saint and a chapel in the parish church of the quarter in which the members of a trade congregated for mutual assistance and protection. So we are not surprised to learn that in the ordinances of Paris a young man who aspired to become a

master might forfeit his chances if he were convicted of a disordered life.

Such was the goldsmith of rule and ordinance. Now let us consider the goldsmith of actuality. Both Spain and Germany have produced wonders of the goldsmith's art. The names of Beceril and Juan d'Arphe are enough alone to throw glory over Spain, and Jamnitzer is but one only of the artists of Germany. But none have left such a record of themselves as the immortal autobiography of Cellini. Benvenuto Cellini, born with the wonderful sixteenth century, gives us the type of the Renaissance goldsmith in his life-history, a work for all time. Vasari says that, as a goldsmith, he was the most renowned artist of his age. That he was an heroic liar has been generally agreed. An early anecdote suggests that conclusion. One day as he and his father sat by the fire they saw a curious little lizard emerge from the burning coals. Just then Benvenuto — "The Welcome," as his father had lovingly christened him—received a most unexpected box on the ear. "My dear child," said his father to the outraged infant, "I do not give you that blow for any fault of your own, but that you may remember that the little lizard which you see in the fire is a Salamander, a creature which no one that I have heard of ever beheld before!"

When we come to his remarkable feats of marksmanship we are convinced that he is transgressing the limits of truth. He may or may not, as he asserts, have shot the Duke of Bour-

bon and the Prince of Orange. That he was able habitually to shoot pigeons through the head with a single ball is extremely unlikely, considering the fowling-pieces of those days. We may note that, while he talks of his "destructive business of engineer," he admits at the same time that he objected very strongly to the presence of two cardinals, of Ravenna and Gaddi, who came near him in their scarlet hats, because they made such a good mark for the enemy.

When, however, he is merely giving the reins to his imagination, and has not wholly divorced himself from truth, his stories are delightful. What can be more amusing than his long account of an expedition with a priest to practise necromancy in the Colosseum? "This ceremony" (of drawing circles on the ground and making noxious odours) "lasted above an hour and a half, when there appeared several legions of devils, insomuch that the amphitheatre was quite filled with them." He asks them news of his Sicilian mistress, Angelica. More devils appear than they bargain for, so that it behoves the priest to be civil to them. "I," says Cellini, "gave myself over for a dead man." All turns out well, and the priest afterwards incites him to indulge in higher flights, with a view to discovering riches by diabolical aid, "these love affairs"—as a priest would naturally feel—"being mere follies from which no good could be expected." Nothing comes of this, as Cellini seemed quite content with the fright he had already received

and the promise of the devils that he should see his beloved Angelica within a month, which prophecy of course comes true.

Cellini has been often reckoned up as a liar, a braggart, and an assassin. If we are to believe him, he certainly did some dirty work. To avenge the death of his brother, Cecchino, he assassinates a musqueteer as he sat at his own door after his supper. "I with great address came close to him with a long dagger, and gave him a violent back-handed stroke, which I had aimed at his neck." The unfortunate man turns to fly. "I pursued," says Cellini, "and hit him exactly upon the nape of the neck. So deep was the penetration of the weapon that I could not withdraw it." Considering the time and country, this deed of vendetta was committed, Cellini certainly considered, in an excellent, nay almost holy cause.

There is no doubt that he had a discreet regard for his own safety, in spite of a very hasty temper, which injured his professional prospects throughout life. He quarrels with his master, Firenzuola, over a question of wages. "The dispute" (in words) "was warm, for Firenzuola was still a better swordsman than jeweller." From this we may infer that Benvenuto was not the man to be drawn into a quarrel without calculating his chances of escaping with a safe skin. Neither was he beneath taking his revenge in a highly unromantic manner when he could not see his way to obtaining it with the accompaniments of drums and trumpets. Having been insulted by

an innkeeper, who demanded payment of his account beforehand, Cellini lies awake all night, "being entirely engaged in meditating revenge for the insolent treatment of our landlord. Now it came into my head to set the house on fire, and now to kill four good horses which the fellow had in his stable." Mature consideration determines him to do fifty crowns' worth of damage by cutting to pieces four brand-new sets of bed linen.

The student of art finds more interest in the picture which Cellini gives of his professional life—the real object, as he says, of his autobiography. Thanks to him we have an admirable account of the generosities and jealousies which swayed the Italian artist, as well as of that system of noble patronage which enabled the splendid works of that period to exist.

Very early in his career, a lady, Signora Porzia Chigi, recommended him to open a shop entirely on his own account. "I did so," he says, "accordingly, and was kept in constant employment by that good lady, so that it was perhaps by her means chiefly that I came to make some figure in the world." It was as a jeweller, *par excellence*, that Cellini first made his mark. "My agreeable art of jewelling," he calls it; and to judge from the pleasant story of his professional emulations as regards Lucagnolo the silversmith, the handicrafts were often carried on in an agreeable and courtly manner, professional jealousy notwithstanding. These two agreed to hold a competition, to see whether

Lucagnolo could make more money out of a piece of plate than Cellini from a tiny jewel. Cellini was successful, whereupon Lucagnolo cursed his art of silver plate hammering, and swore that he would take to making "gew-gaws." Cellini fires up at this word, and promises to defeat Lucagnolo in his own line. So he makes a splendid piece of plate for the Bishop of Salamanca, who worries him every day during the making of it, though as a finished workman there is nothing more hateful to Cellini than being hurried over his work. At last it is completed, and Cellini, having dressed up Paulino, his beautiful apprentice, in his finest clothes, sends him to Lucagnolo with a message in these words: "Signor Lucagnolo, my master Benvenuto has, in pursuance of his promise, sent me to show you a piece of work which he has made in emulation of your performances, and he expects in return to see some of your little 'nick-nacks.'" To this message, Lucagnolo, whom Cellini had in the heat of the moment called a Bœotian, replies: "My pretty youth, tell thy master that he is an excellent artist, and that there is nothing I desire more than his friendship." The sequel of the story does as much credit to Lucagnolo as it reflects disgrace on the bishop. The plate was taken to the prelate when Lucagnolo was by. "He spoke of my work so honourably," says Cellini, "and praised it to such a degree, that he even surpassed my own good opinion of it." The bishop having taken the plate in his hands, said

like a true Spaniard, "By God, I will be as slow in paying him as he was in finishing it!"

It is the fashion to lament the destruction of art craftsmanship by the modern system of the division of labour. Much harm has certainly been done; there is, however, somewhat of a tendency to exaggerate the difference between the age of the Renaissance and our own in this respect. A corrective may be found in the pages of Cellini. Ambition led him to attack the difficult arts of seal engraving and enamelling, in addition to his other accomplishments. "These several branches," he says, "are very different from each other, insomuch that the man who excels in one seldom or never attains to an equal degree of perfection in any of the rest." There is no doubt that Cellini had a remarkable versatility, such as, though not unfrequent in those days, was by no means universal. His rival, Baccio Bandinelli, as Vasari points out, made a lamentable failure in the arts of painting and architecture while aiming at universal excellence. The capacity of Cellini to turn his hand to many arts does not by any means imply that everything he supplied to his patrons was entirely by his own hand. To have done that he would have been compelled, as Paul Lamerie in the last century was, to confine himself to one branch of work. There is no doubt that much was done simply from his own designs, and was not his actual handiwork. Speaking of two jewels made for Francis I., Cellini says: "The

workmanship of these jewels was exquisite, and done" (be it observed) "by my journeymen from my own designs." At the age of twenty-nine, he says, "I kept five able journeymen," and when he was working for Francis, he tells the Duke of Florence he had as many as forty men of his own choosing. But that Cellini could, if necessary, execute in all the different branches he mentions there is no reason to doubt. He was not like the inartistic head of a firm of to-day, which produces poor work, the emanation of no one particular brain. Cellini and his peers were able to produce fine works by means of assistants because their versatile handskill enabled them to direct each one of their workmen in his particular branch.

A point to be noticed is that this employment of assistants was much more universal in the artistic profession then than it is now. The painters made hardly less use of them than the sculptors and the goldsmiths. Michel Angelo intended to employ many artists for the roof of the Sistine Chapel, had they not been after all inadequate to execute his ideas. Recent writers reject the tradition that he worked entirely unaided. Modern feeling in this matter has become more strict. We draw a more definite line between arts and artistic crafts. The painter's is an art which can be delegated nowadays to assistants only to a limited extent. The accusation of a "ghost's" assistance has been frequently made of late years. The goldsmith of to-day may, to the detriment of his

craft, divide labour as much as he likes. Cellini's brain was in direct relation with his assistants, and had not to wage a perpetual war against market prices and machinery.

Hence it was that goldsmiths like Cellini, whom his friend, Michel Angelo, specially recommends as a designer as well as a workman, and who, Giulio Romano says, is too good an artist to work to other people's designs, could entertain painters, sculptors, and goldsmiths upon equal terms. As Vasari says, "He who was not a good designer and well acquainted with working in relief (*i.e.*, he who was not a draughtsman and sculptor) was at that time held to be no finished goldsmith." A large number of the best known painters were trained first as goldsmiths. Cellini, a complete master of that art, was a member of an artistic society in Rome which contained painters, statuaries, and goldsmiths alike. He gives a delightful picture of a dinner at which the founder of the society, one Michel Agnolo, a sculptor (not the great Michel Angelo), was the host of such men as Giulio Romano and Giovanni Francesco, both celebrated pupils of Raphael. It was a Bohemian gathering, to which Cellini, not being provided with a lady, took a handsome youth named Diego dressed as a girl. Sonnets were written by each guest upon some subject or other, and read aloud by the host; music was charmingly played; a wonderful improvisatore sang some admirable verses in praise of the ladies present, and finally Cellini's fair but false

damosel was discovered, to the great disgust of the ladies and the general amusement of the rest of the company.

The patronage of popes and princes made possible the execution of so many important works of art; but the favourite artist of a wealthy patron did not lie always upon a bed of roses. He was exposed to the machinations of court intriguers, and to the usurious swindlings of court secretaries and stewards. When Clement VII. proposed to Cellini to make a model for the button of the pontifical cope, a host of rival designers competed. Cellini's model was chosen; but his patron sagely remarked that it was comparatively easy to make the model in wax, but a very different task to execute the work in gold. Cellini promised to make it ten times as good as the model. The carping bystanders raised an outcry that he was a boaster who promised too much, whereupon a nobleman came to the rescue with the naïve remark, that from the admirable symmetry of shape and happy physiognomy of the young man, he ventured to engage that Benvenuto would perform all his promises and more beside.

Other difficulties were likely to arise. Cardinal Salviati sends one Tobbia to the pope, saying that if his holiness should employ that great artist he would have the means of "humbling the pride of your favourite Benvenuto."

When, again, the pope had commissioned a splendid chalice, there was never a sufficiency

of gold forthcoming to enable the artist to continue the work. It must be remembered that artists were retained on the strength of a yearly salary paid by their patrons, who supplied them with a workshop and all precious materials necessary to the work in hand.

There were, however, times when the artist, feeling more secure after a period of good treatment and the completion of a masterpiece, felt able to take his patron to task, though it might be the holy father himself. When Cellini presented to the pope the medal he had made to commemorate the peace which lasted from 1530 to 1536, he remonstrated with him seriously for his fitful behaviour. His holiness became confused, "and fearing," says Cellini, "that I might say something still more severe than I had already done, told me that the medals were very fine"—and ordered a double reverse to be made, doubtless by way of pacifying his exacting favourite. The fact that after this time Cellini opened a shop "next door to Sugarello the perfumer," accentuates still more strongly the intimate relations of pope and goldsmith, and the difference between the patronage systems of that day and the present.

If a patron could be sometimes hostile, he could also be useful. A craftsman in trouble would first seek the protection of his trade companions. When Cellini killed Pompeo, the Milanese jeweller, Piloto the goldsmith, a trade companion, says to him: "Brother, since the mischief is done, we must be thinking of pre-

serving you from danger." Here we have an instance similar to the uses of the Paris guilds, which had a police and, to a certain extent, a criminal jurisdiction over their members, and, above all things, set themselves to protect any member in trouble. There is a long story of struggle in the Paris guilds against the municipality and the king, who both tried to restrict the guilds to mere trade regulation. But in the case of a homicide some other protection was necessary if the dead man had a patron who was likely to avenge his death. So we find Cellini very glad to come under the shelter of the Cardinals Cornaro and Medici. He finds it advisable to go away to Florence, and is no sooner back in Rome than he is nearly captured by the city guard. However, the safe conduct of Cardinal Farnese, just elected Pope Paul III., saves him from municipal correction.

If only the favour of popes and cardinals were permanent! It is not very long before Cellini is cast into the Castle of St. Angelo on a trumped-up charge of stealing gold when Pope Clement intrusted him with the melting down of the papal jewels during the siege of Rome. He escapes through pluck and ingenuity, but, having annoyed the pope's son, is handed back to Paul III. by the Cardinal Cornaro, who had formerly protected him, in exchange for a bishopric! Imprisoned again, it is his good friend the Cardinal of Ferrara who obtains his freedom, on the ground that the French king desires his services. Out of gratitude Cellini

makes for him a seal, which the cardinal in the joy of his heart ostentatiously compares with the seals of the other Roman cardinals, which were all by the famous seal-engraver, Lautizio. It is a picturesque detail which Cellini gives us of the cardinal connoisseurs boasting one against the other in the possession of a seal or ring by such and such a master hand.

The infamous bargain of Cardinal Cornaro and Paul III. shows the artist as a chattel bandied about between the pope, his cardinals, and the French king, in very much the same way as his productions were alternately praised or blamed, according to the fortunes of court intrigue.

The Cardinal of Ferrara first introduced Cellini to Francis I. Benvenuto acknowledges his debt to the king for causing his delivery from the pope's prison, but he turns up his artistic nose at the idea of coming all the way to France for a beggarly salary of 300 crowns. In a pet Cellini determines to go off on a wild pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, or part of the way at least! The cardinal had said in a passion: "Go wherever you think proper; it is impossible to help a man against his will." Some of the courtiers remarked: "This man must have a high opinion of his own merit, since he refuses 300 crowns." The connoisseurs replied: "The king will never find another artist equal to him, and yet the cardinal is for abating his demands, just as he would bargain for a faggot of wood."

It is not, however, likely that Cellini was ever a very submissive chattel. On the way to France he had had a quarrel with the cardinal's agent, who required him to travel post. Cellini refused, whereupon the agent said that sons of dukes rode in the way that Cellini proposed to travel. The goldsmith's answer was that the sons of the art he professed travelled in the manner he had mentioned. Cellini's personal friends were very much aware of his headstrong nature. "His affairs will do well," writes Caro to Varchi, "if he would let them—with that unmanageable head of his." "We are continually holding up his own interest before his eyes, but he will not see it." No doubt there was truth on both sides. The man of affairs is, and always has been, incapable of quite seeing things with the eyes of the artist.

Cellini soon abandons his crusade to Jerusalem with the fear of imprisonment in his eyes. Francis I., the connoisseur king, who, when he was meditating to do you an ill turn, was in the habit of calling you most affectionately either "father," "son," or "friend," did not as a rule release a prisoner till full five years were past. Cellini had had sufficient prison fare in St. Angelo, and the offended pride of the artist was soothed by the offer of 700 crowns a year, which was exactly the sum that the great Lionardo da Vinci had received from Francis. How could the right relations between patron and artist be better expressed than by the king, who said, "I do not know which pleasure is the greatest,

that of a prince who meets with a man after his own heart, or that of an artist who finds a prince to carry his sublime ideas into execution"?

It was an anxious life, that of a foreign artist in a strange country, put by his patron into a house from which he had to eject the jealous Frenchmen who laid claim to it. One little detail will make this clear. In a list of the workmen he employed, Cellini casually remarked that one, Paolo, "had made but little proficiency in the business, but he was brave and an excellent swordsman." It was no doubt excellent policy to keep someone in the nature of a bully upon the premises. Though a woman helped him to independence, it was a woman who brought Cellini's five years' service from 1540 to 1545 in France to an end. Madame d'Estampes, the king's mistress, thwarted him so much that he was glad to get away and take service with Cosimo de' Medici, Duke of Florence. Here he satisfied his ambition to prove himself a sculptor by performing what he perhaps unwisely considered the great work of his life, the colossal statue of "Perseus" which stands before the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence. It would take too long to tell the exciting story of the casting of the "Perseus" and the squabbles he had with Baccio Bandinelli, whom he accused of enticing his workmen away. Suffice it to say that, when the statue was exhibited in an incomplete state, it was hailed by shouts of applause, and that on the very first day more than twenty sonnets "containing the most hyperbolical phrases"

were pinned upon the gate of his garden. When it was publicly unveiled the crowd was immense. The duke stood at a lower window of the palace, and listened half-concealed to the chorus of applause. Even Bandinelli had the generosity or the policy to praise it, as does also Vasari, the historian of art, whose relations with Benvenuto had not always been of the best. Vasari nevertheless sincerely sums him up as "a man of great spirit and vivacity, bold, active, enterprising and formidable to his enemies ; a man, in short, who knew as well how to speak to princes as to exert himself in his art." A modern writer has described him as "the glass and mirror of corrupt, enslaved, yet still resplendent Italy."

CHAPTER XVII.

ART AND WAR.

"THIS Oriflamme is a precious banner, and was sent first from heaven for a great mystery. . . . And the same day it showed some of its virtue, for all the morning there was a great thick mist, that one could scant see another, but as soon as it was displayed and lift up on high, the mist brake away and the sky was as clear as at any time in the year before. The Lords of France were greatly rejoiced when they saw the sun shine so clear that they might see all about them. It was great beauty then to regard the banners and streamers wave with the wind."

This extract, one of many similar descriptive passages from Sir John Froissart, proves that that delightful writer, though chiefly interested in the feats of arms of knights and "free companions," was singularly alive to the picturesqueness of the actions he describes.

The pomps of war have supplied many motives to the sculptor and the painter, though the tale of war's injuries counterbalances, perhaps, the effects of the stimulus it has given to art. From the time of the making of the Elgin marbles and the painting by Panænus, the brother of Pheidias, of the battle of Marathon,

down to the rearing up of Trajan's column and the embroidering of the Bayeux tapestry, and so onwards through subsequent ages, art has amply illustrated war.

Certain it is that a little knowledge of history will imbue with interest what, as a mere picture, has before seemed to us but a jejune performance. Here is a case in point. In the gallery of the chateau of Chantilly is a picture by one Thierry Bouts, a Flemish painter, whose works are rare and valued, and who lived from 1420 to 1475. It represents, in characteristically stiff fashion, a procession of people entering a church. Some, clad in robes, are supporting on their shoulders a "chasse" or tabernacle for containing relics. A knight in rich armour escorts them. On the steps of the church, waiting to receive them, are a bishop with mitre and crosier accompanied by other ecclesiastics. Behind are seen the spears of a considerable troop, and in the distance is the smoke of a conflagration over which a devil seems to gambol. We are inclined to despair of the interpretation of all this, until history, in this case that of the Dukes of Burgundy, written by Enguerrand de Monstrelet, comes to the rescue. "In 1466," so it runs, "Philip the Good and his son, the Count of Charolais, were besieging Dinant, which was garrisoned by 4,000 revolted Liègeois. In spite of the terrible artillery directed by the Sire de Hagenbach, the inhabitants, relying on the protection of the French king, replied with insults to the heralds who summoned them to

capitulate. 'What craze,' they asked, 'has brought your old mummy of a duke to come and die here? Has he lived so long only to court a miserable end? And your count, what is he doing? Why does not he go to Montlhéry and fight the noble King of France, who will certainly come to succour us? For so he has promised. As for your count, his beak is too tender yet to snap at us; he has come to meet misfortune!' Not content with insults, they actually beheaded and quartered the messenger of the people of Bouvignes, who urged them to surrender. The two enraged princes swore to raze the town, to plough it up and sow it with salt as in the days of old. Dinant was taken. The women and ecclesiastics were carried from the town. Eight hundred of the citizens who escaped the first massacre were tied two and two and cast into the river Meuse. The sack lasted four days, until fire broke out in many places, and attacked the church of Our Lady. The pious Count Charolais (no objector to "just massacres") had given orders above all to respect the church. Sorely afflicted, he was the first to cast himself into the flames, at the risk of his life, to save the holy relics and the jewels of the altar. The purity of his pious motives may be gauged by the fact that he was so occupied by his righteous efforts as to allow his own baggage to be burnt without a thought in the quarter where he lodged. At last he succeeded in saving the chasse of St. Perpetua, which was taken to Bouvignes, opposite Dinant.

This transference is the subject of Thierry Bouts, his picture. History has clothed its dry bones with a more living interest. The knight in armour is the good Count of Charolais. The smoke in the background is that of plundered Dinant, over which the fiend is exulting. This last detail might seem a mere effort of the artist's private fancy. That is by no means the case. He is typifying, in the most matter-of-fact manner, the conviction of the time. Belief in personal devils was paramount throughout all the Middle Ages. Froissart gives us a fine example. Before the battle of Rosebeque, or Rosbach, which was fought by Philip d'Arteveld and the obstreperous men of Ghent against the French king in 1382, there was an alarm in the night. A damosel in the train of Philip d'Arteveld "about the hour of midnight issued out of the pavilion to look out on the air and to see what time of the night it was by likelihood, for she could not sleep." Small wonder, poor thing, in view of the morrow's battle! Gazing towards the Frenchmen's watch-fires she seemed to hear the French war-cry ring out on the still night air. Of this thing she was sore affrayed and so entered into the pavilion, and suddenly awaked Philip, and said: "Sir, rise up shortly and arm you, for I have heard a great noise. . . . I believe it be the Frenchmen that are coming to assail you." Philip rose up, axe in hand, heard the noise, and alarmed the sentinels, who came to him saying that they too had heard the strange sounds, but had seen no Frenchmen

stirring. "And when they of the watch had shewed Philip these words, he appeased himself and all the host: howbeit he had marvel in his mind what it might be. Some said it was fiends of hell that played and tourneyed there where the battle should be the next day, for joy of the great prey that they were likely to have." We may be certain then that the critics of Thierry Bouts the painter, whatever else they might object to, would not be surprised at his pictorial representation of the fiend, whether he were engaged in prospective, present, or mere retrospective enjoyment. Does not William of Malmesbury's "English Chronicle" say that St. Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, had foreseen the murder of King Edmund by a robber in the year 944, "being fully persuaded of it from the gesticulations and insolent mockery of a devil dancing before him"?

From Velasquez with his "Lances" or the "Surrender of Breda," to Vernet and his long series of Napoleonic battle-pieces, and beyond him to the clever French military painters of to-day, the practice has been always the same. Art would have lost much if wars and rumours of wars had not inspired the military patron and the obsequious or patriotic painter.

We can but touch, for instance, upon the subject of arms and armour. What a field of artistic employment has existed in the decoration of weapons with gold and silver inlay and precious stones! Pliny speaks of the soldiers of his time as men who, holding even ivory in contempt,

have the hilts of their swords made of chased silver. "Their scabbards jingle with silver chains and their belts with the plates of silver with which they are inlaid." The Moorish conquerors of Spain vied with the Spaniards in the production of finely-tempered and ornamented weapons. A peculiarly suggestive dagger is figured by M. Juan Riano. The handle of this murderous-looking weapon consists of a skeleton realistically modelled, its legs entwisted with a serpent. Nothing ever more appropriately suggested poison and destruction.

Kings and princes loved to look well on the day of battle. Froissart mentions that "the King of Castile at the battle of Aljubarrota had a knight of his house who bare his bassenet, whereupon there was a circle of gold and stones valued at twenty thousand franks." This the king intended to wear "when they came to the business." In the press the knight was separated from the king, but was fortunately able to bring the helmet faithfully back after the defeat.

Holbein did not disdain to design dagger-sheaths for the goldsmith to execute, and Velasquez has faithfully copied, in an allegorical picture of "Jael and Sisera," into which Olivarez is introduced, a magnificent suit of armour made for Charles V. in the ancient Roman style, which still exists in the armoury at Madrid. There, too, may be seen the very suit that John of Austria wore at Lepanto, and the armour of Columbus in black and white, with silver medallions.

There also exist the swords of Charles V., Philip II., and the adventurers Cortez and Pizarro. The sword which Francis I. surrendered at Pavia was annexed by Murat, King of Naples.

The connection of art and war may be viewed from another standpoint. In the days when a hard and fast line was not drawn between the professions, and versatility seemed common, we find that the artist, as well as the churchman, was often a conspicuous man of war. When Earl Douglas lay wounded at the battle of Otterbourne, "a chaplain of his with a good axe in his hands scrimmished about the earl there as he lay . . . whereby he had great praise, and thereby the same year he was made archdeacon of Aberdeen." He was a worthy companion to Guido, the fighting Bishop of Arezzo, whose warlike doings were recorded on twelve reliefs surrounding his tomb, which was afterwards destroyed by the French under the Duke of Anjou. When priests could fight, and even win preferment by such unorthodox means, it is not unnatural to find Leonardo da Vinci recommending himself to Ludovico Sforza of Milan on the grounds that he can make bridges, scaling ladders, mines, cannons, mortars, and "fire engines," catapults, mangonels, and many other useful articles. These he puts in the forefront of his memorial, adding as an afterthought, "Then I can execute sculpture; . . . also in painting I can do as much as any other, be he who he may." Dr. Jean Paul Richter, in his life of Leonardo,

says that "it is probable that as long as da Vinci remained at Milan in the duke's service, his talents and his activity were more directed to engineering than to art." Cellini, too, early in his career acts as an artillerist for Clement VII. during the siege of Rome, and performs great prodigies by his own account. Later on he mentions that, when Florence was fortified by Duke Cosimo, he himself, goldsmith and sculptor, Bandinelli, sculptor, and Francesco da St. Gallo, sculptor, were all employed as engineers. A notable instance of the reverse procedure is to be found in the free companion or soldier of fortune turning artist. Giacomo Cortese, called "Il Borgognone" (Burgundian), was first led to become a painter by seeing in the Vatican a picture of the battle of Constantine, while engaged in one of his Italian compaigns. His experiences fitted him to be a battle-painter. His biographer says of his pictures, "we seem to see courage fighting for honour and life, and to hear the sound of the trumpets, the neighing of the horses, and the screams of the wounded." The excellence of contemporary French battle-painters is in a large measure due to the fact that they are recording what they have actually seen. Great was the loss to French art when Henri Regnault, the painter of the splendid portrait of "General Prim," "Salome," and the "Moorish Execution," died at his post as a volunteer during the siege of Paris. West's picture of the "Death of General Wolfe" is familiar to us through the widely-sold engraving

of Woollett. Bryan's dictionary says, "perhaps no English picture ever had so great a degree of popularity as the 'Death of Wolfe.'" West had lived among the Indians, is supposed indeed to have received his first lessons in colour from the Cherokees. What wonder, then, that the man who at first sight compared the "Apollo Belvedere" to a Mohawk warrior bow in hand, was inspired to reproduce the Indians and the British soldier as he saw them, and so revolutionise historic painting? Reynolds had tried to dissuade him from such an innovation, but in the end admitted he himself was in the wrong. Barry, Romney, and two other painters had competed against Benjamin West in the same subject. Barry's picture, evolved from his own fancy strictly according to the principles of the classical undraped figure, was naturally a disastrous failure.

If Barry's picture deserved its fate, vicissitudes undeserved and ludicrous sometimes befall the military picture. In the chapel of one of the principal colleges in Paris there was a picture representing Napoleon I. and his staff in Egypt visiting the plague hospitals. After the restoration of the Bourbons, Napoleon was converted into a Christ and his aides-de-camp into apostles. The costumes, however, were not entirely changed, and our Saviour appeared in the boots of Napoleon.

That name is the connecting link between the tale of the advantages of war and the story of the wrongs which it has done to art. In our

chapter on the Renaissance we have noted the effect upon artists of the fearful sack of Rome in 1527. Since then there have been many acts of robbery and plunder committed in many a just or unjust cause. If, for instance, the civil war in England was supported on King Charles I.'s side by the sacrifice of the college plate of loyal Oxford, whereby Cambridge, the Parliamentarian university, is to-day the richer of the two in salvers and tankards, the Parliamentarians were as much to blame. In a history of the "Civil Warres of Great Britain and Ireland, By an Impartiall Pen," which takes little trouble to disguise a Royalist devotion, we find a notice of the pulling down of Cheapside Cross in these words: "But now the zeal of the Roundhead party begins to appear in its height, no monument of pretended superstition must stand. Cheapside Cross (as the conclusion of their reformation), which for a long time had stood the glory and beauty of the City of London, must down as a thing abominably idolatrous; but there was certainly more in it than the idolatry of it, the gold and lead about it would yield money to the advancement of the cause." The "Impartiall Pen" was shrewd enough to see that the Puritans were adepts at the art of killing two birds with one stone.

While earlier stories of loot and plunder are vague and wanting in detail, the devastations of the generals of Napoleon in the Peninsular War have been put on record by the Spanish historians. Demetrius Poliorcetes is said to have

refrained from capturing Rhodes by means of fire in order to save one picture the city contained. The French generals sacked towns and butchered their inhabitants, but took care first to plunder their works of art. Ford, in his "Handbook of Spain," tells a characteristic story of Soult. At Seville were two fine Murillos, which were concealed by the chapter of the cathedral on the approach of the French. A traitor informed Soult, who sent to beg them as a present, hinting that if refused he would take them by force. The marshal was one day showing his gallery in Paris to an English colonel, when he stopped opposite a Murillo, and said, "I very much value that, as it saved the lives of two estimable persons." An aide-de-camp whispered, "He threatened to have them both shot on the spot unless they gave up the picture." Here is a companion story about Junot, the sergeant who rose from the ranks and contracted a taste for art in the process. The writer was told this by a well-known connoisseur who had the story from the sacristan of the cathedral at Toledo. The sacristan said that his predecessor was showing to Junot the crown of the Virgin, who admired it greatly. Presently he reached up his hand, and adroitly wrenched off a fine emerald, with the playful phrase, "Ceci me convient à moi," and put it in his pocket. His foibles were jewellery and manuscripts. He stole a magnificent illuminated missal from Lisbon, which was eventually returned. Soult fancied pictures. The inhabitants of Seville sent many

of their valuables to Cadiz. A picture by Correggio upon panel, belonging to one of the convents, was sawn into two pieces for the sake of portability. On the way the two parts got separated ; one part was sold to a connoisseur with the promise that the other half should be delivered to him. The other part was sold to another collector on a similar agreement. Both parts eventually came to England, and the possessor of each stoutly maintained that he had a right to the other's lot.

When Soult left Seville after Marmont's defeat at Salamanca, such was his hurry that he left more than 1,500 pictures behind. The yawning gaps caused by his removal of four Murillos from the cathedral La Caridad have purposely never been refilled. The majority of the pictures were no doubt requisitioned by Napoleon for the glory of France, but Soult's private collection, which came to the hammer in 1852, was a very notable one. In the preface to the catalogue are the following remarks : " The celebrity of the gallery of the late Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, is European. Its reputation was that of a museum rather than of a private collection, and the general excitement which the announcement of its sale has caused is enough to certify its importance. . . . It is one of those events which occur but once or twice in a century. The gallery owes its fame not merely to the masterpieces with which it abounds, but also to the fact that they belong specially to the Spanish School. Outside of

Spain it is the only collection containing so many works of the great masters of that school. It contains fifteen Murillos . . . of the highest excellence . . . also eighteen Zurbarans . . . four Riberas . . . seven Alonzo Canos. . . . May we express the regret," the writer goes on to say, "that we feel at the idea that the majority of these masterpieces are probably fated to leave France." Thus was the collection dispersed in the odour of sanctity, without a reference to the manner of its formation.

When General Hill was about to occupy Aranjuez, the Duke of Wellington wrote to him to take care that the officers and troops respected the king's houses and gardens. The Frenchmen, Soult, Victor, and others, plundered them several times over. At Santiago Ney suffered a disappointment. After three months' occupation he was compelled to leave in haste with half a ton of silver plate from the cathedral; but his accomplice, Bory, laments that the apparently solid silver candelabra were as thin as a halfpenny and weighed very little. Much of the plunder of the French was recovered when they suffered their numerous defeats; but so small a part was it of the whole, that the belief long existed that large quantities were buried. Many treasure-hunting expeditions were indulged in. Borrow, in his "Bible in Spain," gives an account in his picturesque manner of a search made for diamonds and moidores at Compostella on the instigation of one Benedict Mol, a Swiss soldier in the Walloon Guard that accompanied

the French to Portugal: "A solemn festival was drawing nigh, and it was deemed expedient that the search should take place upon that day. The day arrived. All the bells in Compostella pealed. The whole populace thronged from their houses, a thousand troops were drawn up in the square, the expectation of all was wound up to the highest pitch. A procession directed its course to the church of San Roque; at its head was the captain-general and the Swiss, brandishing the magic rattan; close behind walked the 'Meiga,' the Gallegan witch-wife by whom the treasure-seeker had been originally guided in the search; numerous persons brought up the rear, bearing implements to break up the ground. The procession enters the church; they pass through it in solemn march; they find themselves in a vaulted passage. The Swiss looks round. 'Dig here,' said he, suddenly. 'Yes, dig here,' said the 'Meiga.' The masons labour; the floor is broken up—a horrid and fetid odour arises. . . .

"Enough; no treasure was found, and my warning to the unfortunate Swiss turned out but too prophetic. He was forthwith seized and flung into the horrid prison of St. James, amidst the execrations of thousands, who would have gladly torn him limb from limb. The affair did not terminate here. The political opponents of the government did not allow so favourable an opportunity to escape for launching the shafts of ridicule. . . . The Liberal press wafted on its wings through Spain the story of the treasure-

hunt of St. James." The Swiss, Benedict Mol, was done to death in secret.

The works of art with which Napoleon beautified Paris soon became a subject of patriotic admiration. It was a bitter blow when, after Waterloo, the celebrated Venetian bronze horses were removed from the Place du Carrousel. We are told in Milton's "Letters from Paris," that the French could not be persuaded that the event could take place. The mere attempt, it was asserted, would lead to a general insurrection. This did not, however, take place. The populace were restrained by the Austrian cavalry, and the removal was witnessed by crowds of sightseers. "English ladies were seen contesting places with French officers, whose undisguised animosity appeared rather to amuse than to frighten them." When one of the horses was suspended in the air, "the French could no longer bear the sight, most of them drew back from the windows, unable to suppress or disguise their feelings. . . . It was impossible at the moment not to feel some pity for the humiliation and misery of the French."

The same writer describes the stripping of the Louvre. "That part of the gallery which was filled with the productions of the Flemish masters is become little else than a wilderness of empty frames. . . . We expect that the rich treasures of Italy will shortly disappear. The statues and pictures that belonged to Prussia . . . Prince Blucher took away without ceremony, the first leisure day after his arrival in

Paris." . . . "One of the Dutch commissioners was affected with so lively a gaiety as almost to dance round the pictures as they lay on the floor. He assured us that it was the happiest day of his existence: that he lived at Antwerp, and that now he could go to church in comfort."

From Stocqueler's "Life of Wellington" we learn the reasons why all these restorations were carried out. The king, Louis XVIII., had promised the King of the Netherlands that if he should ever recover his crown, he would restore all the works of art belonging to Holland and Belgium which Napoleon had removed. When this agreement became known, all the other powers put in their claims. The odium which rightly belonged to Louis XVIII. for having made his unfortunate promise was taken on to his own shoulders by Wellington, who foresaw how unpopular the new king would be from the outset in Paris if known to be the cause of the stripping of the Louvre.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ART AND RELIGION.

The debt of art to religion is unquestionably very great. Some of its greatest manifestations have derived their inspiration therefrom, as every lover of antique and Christian art well knows. We are, however, apt to forget that there were long periods in the history of the Christian Church when its attitude to art was quite removed from that of a beneficent patron.

Vasari's opinion is strongly stated. "Infinitely more ruinous than all other enemies to the arts above named, was the fervent zeal of the new Christian religion, which after long and sanguinary combats had finally overcome and annihilated the ancient creeds of the pagan world, by the frequency of miracles exhibited, and by the earnest sincerity of the means adopted. Ardently devoted with all diligence to the extirpation of error, nay, to the removal of even the slightest temptation to heresy, it not only destroyed all the wondrous statues, paintings, sculptures, mosaics, and other ornaments of the false pagan deities, but at the same time extinguished the very memory, in casting down the honours, of numberless excellent ancients,

to whom statues and other monuments had been erected. And although the Christian religion did not effect this from hatred to these works of art, but solely for the purpose of abasing and bringing into contempt the gods of the Gentiles, yet the result of this too ardent zeal did not fail to bring such total ruin over the noble arts that their very form and existence was lost."

It is a curious reflection that the successors of of St. Peter in the fifteenth century should have begun to treasure up every scrap and fragment of this antique art which their predecessors had so ruthlessly destroyed.

But apart from destructive zeal, the first effects of the rise of Christianity upon art were deadening. To take a concrete instance, we have seen in our chapter on Gems, that the glyptic art decayed beneath the influence of the Gnostics and the early Christians. The Abraxas mysteries and occult mottoes of the Gnostics, the limited symbols of the Christians, such as the fish, the anchor, and the ship, were but a poor substitute for the pagan mythology. Slow and painful were the steps to be taken before the art which Christianity helped to abolish was replaced by the later splendours of the Renaissance.

The attitude of religion as a whole to art, if we take different epochs and countries into consideration, will be found to be one of continual inconsistency.

It was a cruel blow when the Iconoclasts began their barbarous attacks. In his interest-

ing book upon ivories, Maskell says, "The Christian iconoclasts of Constantinople, even if they did not follow the 'heresy' of Mahomet in this matter (the prohibition of the representation of the deity and man in art) to its fullest extent, at least equalled it in hatred of all holy images and sacred sculpture, and in the severity with which they persecuted the workers and purchasers of such works. Towards the middle of the eighth century the power and influence of these fanatics reached their height, and with Leo the Isaurian on the throne received the fullest support which an emperor could give. We must attribute to the rage of the Iconoclasts, indiscriminating in its fury, not only the destruction of Christian monuments and sculpture, but of many of the most important remains then still existing of the best periods of ancient Greek art. This persecution continued for more than a hundred years, until the reign of Basil the Macedonian, A.D. 867, who by permitting again the right use of images restored to the arts their free exercise." These puritans commenced that reprehensible practice of whitening, in which later on we shall find the Italian monks so fond of indulging. Says Gibbon, "The sect of the Iconoclasts were supported by the zeal and despotism of six emperors, and the east and west were involved in a noisy conflict of 120 years." . . . "Three hundred and thirty-eight bishops pronounced and subscribed a unanimous decree that all visible symbols of Christ except the Eucharist were either blasphemous or

heretical." But this decree was not received without resistance. "The first hostilities of Leo were directed against a lofty Christ on the vestibule and above the gate of the palace. A ladder had been planted for the assault, but it was furiously shaken by a crowd of zealots and women: they beheld with pious transport the ministers of sacrilege tumbling from on high and dashed against the pavement."

The Italians of the Western Empire would have nothing to do with Iconoclasm. Religion was divided against itself upon the question of art, and by a decree of ninety-three bishops Gregory II. pronounced "a general excommunication against all who by word or deed attack the tradition of the fathers and the images of the saints."

That the loss to Eastern European art was compensated to some extent by the gain of the West is certainly the case. Exiles from Constantinople were welcomed by Charlemagne, and kept alive the old traditions, but that these infatuated Iconoclasts deeply intensified the darkness of the dark ages can hardly be denied.

The story of the relations of art and religion is thus to a certain extent to be found in the history of the sects whose tenets have alternately triumphed and succumbed. But, as Gibbon says, after one hundred and twenty years of destruction, "zeal was fatigued, and the restoration of images was celebrated as the feast of orthodoxy." We shall see, then, that the orthodox religion regarded art as an orthodox

manifestation and not a heresy. So in the gloomy periods of the barbarian inroads we shall find the monastery its shelter and its home. But we shall also learn that when in the name of religion an Inquisition perpetrates the most hideous iniquities, it is not unaccompanied by the adornments of art. We shall discover that the spirit of religious fervour could be so inconsistent in different times and places, that art in England could be eventually starved by a reformation which was kindled by the Indulgences issued to obtain the money for the adornments of art upon St. Peter's Church at Rome. At the same time the artist who beautifies religion in the fifteenth century may fall into the clutches of the Holy Office for a supposed insult to an image for the construction of which, in the time of the Iconoclasts, he would have equally been burnt alive.

Let us not anticipate, but glance for a moment at the benefits conferred on art by monasteries, which, according to Montalembert, were at once the schools, record offices, libraries, hostelries, and studios of early Christian society. Who has not admired at once the architecture of ruined monasteries and the artistic feeling which seems to have inspired the placing in their particular environment of so many beautiful abbeys? What wonder if the peaceful inmates of such lovely edifices were led to art as well as literature! Edouard Drumont, in his charming book, "Mon vieux Paris," has given a delightful picture of the Abbaye de Saint-Germain-des-

Près from the literary and artistic point of view: "While the services within the abbey take the inmates to their chapel each day at the same appointed hours, outside the seasons follow each other, alternating with calm and terror. Long-haired kings, with strange names and uncouth manners, were being humanized by this moral power, which swayed them though they knew it not. They would bring thither the volumes they had found upon some warlike expedition. After them would come others, more rugged still, and almost savages. Sometimes, at the first glimmer of daybreak, while matins were being read, a dread noise disturbs the holy exercise. It is the Normans beaching their boats crammed with warriors, whose shouting echoes from as far off as Saint-Cloud. They rush upon the abbey, and the poor monks are forced, for the fifth time at least, to seek a shelter in the Cité. Some carry the holy vessels, others save the manuscripts, and so the worship of God and the genius of man vanish together in flight before the precipitate invasion. The barbarians, masters of the abbey, have found a reliquary of gold, which they melt down at a fire fed with the last books of Tacitus or the comedies of Menander."

"Later on there is still fighting, but the greater perils of invasion are overpast. Now appears a master who makes living works, some stone-mason inspired with a spark of genius, glad enough to praise God after his fashion, and express his faith in sculpture of wood and stone.

He has found a home in these abbeys and priories, where his art is understood, as it never can be by the powerful baron, however well-meaning, who vacantly watches the mason at his work, while his own mind is bent upon some distant expedition."

These passages describe the earlier age, when religion was all in all, and the Church fostered art without an adverse influence. But when the artist had found his feet, though he continued glad of the patronage of the Church, he began to resent its exclusive inspiration. "It may fairly be questioned," says J. A. Symonds, "whether that necessary connection between art and religion, which is commonly taken for granted, does in truth exist; in other words, whether great art might not flourish without any religious intent. This, however, is a speculative problem for the present and the future rather than the past. Historically it has always been found that the arts in their origin are dependent on religion." Art aims at expressing an ideal, and ideals in unsophisticated societies are only found under the forms of religion. We may say, then, that while art was tentative, the artist was content to be dependent on religion. Until the re-discovery of the beauty of the antique art emancipated the painter from the utterly conventional and untrue forms of the angular and expressionless Byzantine saints, he had not discovered the capacity of art to exist as an end in itself. When at last he found that his skill was sufficient to reproduce everything that

was beautiful beneath the bright Italian sun, and that pictures were worth painting for art's sake alone, then religion became a hindrance and a stumbling-block. The sensuous pagan spirit which was awakened by the new admiration for the antique, which sprang up contemporaneously with the laxest period of ecclesiastical corruption in Italy, carried the artist too far, and led to the reaction of Savonarola. This made artists like Fra Bartolomeo destroy their studies of the nude, and take to evolving in a chastened spirit works inferior to what they would have done if unhindered by considerations of religious requirements. But the time had passed when many painters fasted and prayed before commencing a picture of the Madonna. The religious pictures of Raphael and Perugino were painted by two men as world-loving as any that ever lived. The merit of them is in the art, the religious feeling which so affects the spectator is imparted to the canvas by such means as the trade trick of lowered eyes and elevated eyebrows.

It was natural that in Italy, the home of art, the monasteries should add their quota of creative geniuses. Vasari is as sensible as usual upon this subject. It appears to him in his life of Don Lorenzo, a monk of the Angeli of Florence, that permission to pursue some honourable occupation must needs prove a great solace to a good and upright man who has taken monastic vows. Music, letters, painting, or any other liberal or even mechanical art, any of these, the writer

thinks, must be a very valuable resource. He might have gone further and laid down that unless he was engaged in charitable works, only the pursuit of some useful profession or trade could justify the existence of a monk. "Experience," he says, "has sufficiently proved that from one sole germ the genius and industry of men, aided by the influences of time, will frequently elicit many fruits," and thus it happened in the monastery of the Angeli, founded by Guittone d'Arezzo of the Frati Gaudenti in 1294, "of which the monks were ever remarkable for their attainment in the arts of design and painting." Don Lorenzo was not the only excellent master among them. Don Jacopo was "the best writer of large letters that had ever then been known in Tuscany, or, indeed, in all Europe; nor has his equal been seen even to the present day." So great was his fame that Don Paolo Orlandini, a monk of the same foundation, wrote a long poem in his honour, and the right hand that had made so many beautiful flourishes was, together with that of Don Silvestro, who adorned the same books with miniatures, enshrined in a tabernacle as a venerable relic. Leo X., who had heard these books praised by his father, Lorenzo the Magnificent, coveted them greatly for St. Peter's at Rome. Embroidery was also a favourite occupation of these fathers who successfully practised so many kinds of art.

No doubt the fathers of the Angeli were exceptionally gifted, but from other monasteries

came monks more celebrated still. Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, the masterly painter and holy man known to fame as Fra Angelico, had the rare generosity to refuse the archbishopric of Florence. He suggested that it should be conferred on Frate Antonio, who was eventually canonized by Adrian VI. "A great proof of excellence," says Vasari, "was this act of Fra Giovanni, and without doubt a very rare thing."

Fra Bartolomeo, who was of a timid disposition, made for the cloister, when the faction opposed to Savonarola attacked him in the convent of San Marco, "vowed that if he might be permitted to escape from the rage of that strife he would instantly assume the religious habit of the Dominicans." In the life of this celebrated painter we come across another instance of the effects of fanaticism upon art. He had become an ardent disciple of Savonarola, who preached vigorously against undraped pictures. "It was the custom in Ferrara to erect cabins of firewood and other combustibles on the public piazza during the time of carnival, and on the night of Shrove Tuesday, these huts being set on fire, the people were accustomed to dance around them, men and women joining hands, according to ancient custom, and encircling the fire with songs and dances." Savonarola's preaching so worked upon the people that they brought pictures and sculpture by the most excellent masters, which they hurled into the fire, with books and instruments of music—"a most lamentable destruc-

tion," says Vasari, "and more particularly as to the paintings." To this pile brought Fra Bartolomeo all his studies and drawings from the nude. His example was followed by Lorenzo di Credi and many others, who received the appellation of the "Piagnoni," or "Weepers."

Fra Bartolomeo was the type of a monkish artist. More adventurous was the career of Fra Filippo Lippi, the Carmelite, who at the age of seventeen threw off the clerical habit when he heard his painting compared with that of Masaccio. Some time afterwards he was rowing with his friends near Ancona on the sea, when they were all captured by a Moorish galley and taken to Barbary, where Fra Filippo was a slave for eighteen months. One day he took a piece of charcoal from the fire and astonished his fellow-slaves by drawing on a whitewashed wall a life-size portrait of their master in his Moorish robes. It was regarded as a miracle, and secured him his freedom. Returning to Florence he became known to Cosimo de' Medici, who was his staunch friend. Fra Filippo was exactly the reverse in disposition to Fra Bartolomeo. Cosimo wished him to finish a work in the Palazzo Medici, so he shut him up that Fra Filippo might not waste his time as usual in running about after his pleasures. Filippo endured it for two days, but then made ropes out of the sheets of his bed, let himself down out of the window, and did nothing but amuse himself for a week.

His elopement with Lucrezia, the beautiful

daughter of Francesco Buti, a citizen of Florence, from the convent of Santa Margherita, was indeed a scandal. He had persuaded the nuns to allow her to sit to him as a model for the Virgin, and on a certain day when she had gone forth to do honour to the cintola or girdle of Our Lady, Filippo most inappropriately carried her off. If religion lost, art was a gainer, for the result of this escapade was Filippino Lippi, no less celebrated a painter than his father. Authority seems for once to have looked lightly on the misdoings of the amorous artist. Giovanni de' Medici in a letter to Bartolomeo Serragli says, "and so we laughed a good while at the error of Fra Filippo." He was not meant for the cloister. As Browning says:

> "The beauty and the wonder and the power,
> The shapes of things, their colours, light, and shades,
> Changes, surprises . . . ."

made the four walls of a monastery too narrow a limit for a vigorous artistic temperament.

There were plenty of clerics with all the failings of Fra Filippo, but without his artistic perceptions. The Holy Father, Sixtus IV., judged artistic success by the gaudiness of the colours employed. Cosimo Rosselli, when competing in the Sistine Chapel for a prize offered by that pontiff, felt that his invention and drawing were inferior to that of his rivals. He concealed his deficiencies as much as possible by covering his canvas with the finest ultramarine and gold. His opponents jeered and

bantered him without compassion. But Cosimo knew his pope, whose eyes were so dazzled that he ordered all the other painters to cover their pictures with similar colours.

In contrast with Sixtus IV.'s predilection for strong colour was the inordinate love of whitewash evinced by some monks and friars. Giotto's paintings in the chapter house of the Friars Minors at Padua had been whitened over. Later on some of them were with great pain and labour restored, when "who could have imagined it," says the Marchese Selvatico, "these friars, who are mad for the 'candido,' took the whitening brush and covered them over again!" What shall be said of those successors to the monks who commissioned Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper"? These vandals permitted a door to be broken through the feet of the central figure of the Saviour for some trivial purpose of their own convenience.

Besides treating the work of older masters with contumely, the monks were not averse to stinting the moderns. We have noted elsewhere that such expensive colours as ultramarine were supplied in the fifteenth century by the patron of the painter. Pietro Perugino executed many pictures for the convent of the Frati Gesuati. Now the prior of this cloister was very successful in the production of ultramarine, but being of a stingy nature he always insisted on being present while Perugino was painting, and doling the colour out in small quantities. Perugino washed his brush out so

often in water that a large quantity of the ultramarine was deposited as a sediment in the bottom of the cup. The prior, finding his bag of powder becoming empty while the work did not seem to progress, cried out, "Oh, what a lot of ultramarine this plaster does swallow up!" "You see for yourself how it is," said Perugino, and at last the prior went away. Thereupon the painter strained off the water from the ultramarine sediment, and returned it eventually to the prior, with the injunction to trust an honest man, who had no desire to deceive those who confided in him, but could easily circumvent the suspicious.

Another ingenious monk was the sacristan of the monastery of the Servites, who, by playing on the jealousies of Andrea del Sarto and Francia Bigio, who, friends at first, were now rivals, contrived to beautify his monastery at a small cost. He represented that Francia Bigio for the mere sake of fame was ready to do all the paintings required. Fear of this induced Andrea del Sarto to undertake a contract for the whole at the paltry sum of ten ducats for each picture. This the wily sacristan declared that he paid out of his own pocket, saying that the commission was more for the advantage of his friend Andrea than for the need or benefit of the monastery. It was, indeed, the fate of Andrea del Sarto to be cheated and cajoled, for he destroyed his happiness in life by becoming the abject slave of a hard and worthless woman.

These same Servite fathers do not appear to

have been so much endowed with tact as with chicanery. They presumed to uncover Francia Bigio's paintings before they were finished. This enraged Francia Bigio as perhaps only an Italian artist can be enraged. He hurried to the place, seized a mason's hammer, beat the heads of two female figures in pieces, ruined that of the Madonna, and falling upon a nude figure dashed the plaster from the wall. The horrified fathers implored him to stop, offering to pay him double price to have the painting restored. But the irritated painter refused, and so the fresco remains to this day.

Lucky for him was it that this onslaught was made in Italy and not within the sphere of the Spanish Inquisition, that "Holy Office" which, while perpetrating the most hideous and unjustifiable enormities, did not omit to adorn its bloody scaffold with the sculptured effigies of the apostles or prophets.

Botticelli, it is true, had painted a picture in Italy of the Assumption of Our Lady, and all the heavenly circles, which incurred the stigma of heresy. It was reserved for Torregiano, the blustering sculptor with whom Cellini was so disgusted because he broke Michel Angelo's nose, to fall into the pious clutches of the religious fiends of Spain. Torregiano made the tomb of Henry VII. in his beautiful chapel at Westminster. From England, the land of a reformed religion, he went to Spain, where the cruellest bigotry was rampant. There the Duke of Arcos commissioned him to make a Madonna

and Child. For this he is said to have paid him with an immense amount of copper coins. A Florentine friend represented to Torregiano that this vast weight only came in value to thirty ducats. Torregiano, enraged at the deception, recklessly smashed the statue to atoms. But, alas! he had forgotten what country he was in. The fact that he had been employed by Henry VIII. and had lately come from reforming England perhaps stood him in evil stead. The Spanish scoundrel denounced him for sacrilege to the Inquisition, by whom he was condemned to death. Despair caused him to starve himself in his miserable prison, and so cheat the Holy Office of at least one victim.

It was in Spain, perhaps, that the deadening influence of legislation was most felt upon art. The Church was a more exclusive patron of art in that country than in Italy. Ferdinand and Isabella had signalized themselves by the enactment of useless sumptuary laws which destroyed the art of silk embroidery. They were also the encouragers of that Inquisition which did Torregiano to death. Stirling, in his life of Velasquez, says: "The inquisition, which, like death, knocked when it pleased at every door, and would be refused admittance at none, which ruled the printing press with a rod of iron, and even pried into the recesses of an author's desk, was not slow in finding its way to the studio, and asserting its dominion over art. It put forth a decree forbidding the making, exposing to sale, or possessing immodest pictures,

prints, or sculptures, under pain of excommunication, a fine of 1,500 ducats, and a year's exile. Inspectors or censors were likewise appointed by the tribunal, in the principal towns, to see that this decree was obeyed, and to report to the Holy Office any transgression of it that might fall within their notice. Pacheco (father-in-law of Velasquez) was named to this post at Seville in 1618 and held it for many years, and Palomino, later in the same century, fulfilled similar functions, which he esteemed an honour, at Madrid. Both of these writers devote a considerable portion of their treatises on painting to laying down rules for the orthodox representation of sacred subjects. The code of sacro-pictorial law was first, however, promulgated in a separate form in Spain by Fray Juan Interian de Ayala, a monk of the order of Mercy and a doctor of Salamanca. Several pages are devoted to a disquisition on the true shape of the cross of Calvary; the question whether one or two angels sat on the stone rolled away from Our Lord's sepulchre at the Resurrection is anxiously debated; and the right of the devil to his prescriptive horns and tail is not admitted until after a rigorous examination of the best authorities." The painter was regarded as the servant of religion and the Church. There was hardly a Spanish artist who had not passed some portion of his life, many passed the whole, in convents and cathedrals. Velasquez was the first to escape the trammels of the Church, only to fall into the equally narrow limitations of a court.

But not in Spain alone did clerical law and edict restrict art. In England reforming zeal during the reign of Edward VI. had dire effects upon church plate. Previous to his reign English communion chalices had been of a very beautiful description. Though no ordinance of any kind can be discovered prescribing one pattern for chalices, the extraordinary uniformity of the ornament must surely have been due to some stringent regulation. It consisted of one or two bands of engraving in a woodbine design which was a poor substitute for the magnificent church plate of previous reigns.

The Puritans carried their vexatious interference many steps further, and started a new crusade against church windows and pictures which was worthy of the original Iconoclasts. There was an admixture of hypocrisy about this destruction. Under the disguise of religious zeal they cherished an appreciation of the proceeds of their confiscations as a useful addition to the support of their arms. Henry VIII.'s tomb by Rovezzano, which, when completed, was to have had, besides the recumbent figures of Henry and Jane Seymour, 133 statues and 44 "stories" or bas-reliefs, was sold by the Parliamentary Commissioners in 1646 for £600, and the rich figures of copper-gilt melted down. Here are some of their enactments: "Ordered that all such pictures there (at York House) as have the representation of the Second Person in Trinity upon them, shall be forthwith burnt." "Ordered that all such pictures there as have

the representation of the Virgin Mary upon them, shall be forthwith burnt."

"One Bleese," says Walpole, was hired for half-a-crown a day to break the painted glass windows of Croydon church.

We have fallen on days of religious toleration at last. Art is no longer much trammelled even if it is no longer much supported by the Church. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Benjamin West, and others about the year 1773 offered, at the suggestion of Dr. Newton, Dean of St. Paul's, to decorate the cathedral with painting. The Royal Academy had made an application, in the course of which it was remarked that "the art of painting would never grow up to maturity and perfection unless it were introduced into churches as in foreign countries," but the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury stepped in and prevented future church patronage of artists. Not till our own time has the ban of intolerance been removed, and our great cathedral decorated.

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